



The Cold War Thaws

The Big Idea

The Cold War began to thaw as the superpowers entered an era of uneasy diplomacy.

Why It Matters Now

The United States and the countries of the former Soviet Union continue to cooperate and maintain a cautious peace.

Key Terms and People

Nikita Khrushchev
Leonid Brezhnev
John F. Kennedy
Lyndon Johnson
détente
Richard M. Nixon
SALT
Ronald Reagan
Margaret Thatcher

Setting the Stage

In the postwar years, the Soviet Union kept a firm grip on its satellite countries in Eastern Europe. These countries were Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, and East Germany. (Yugoslavia had broken away from Soviet control in 1948, although it remained Communist.) The Soviet Union did not allow them to direct and develop their own economies. Instead, it insisted that they develop industries to meet Soviet needs. These policies greatly hampered Eastern Europe's economic recovery.

Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe and China

More moderate Soviet leaders came to power after Stalin's death in 1953. They allowed satellite countries somewhat more independence, as long as they remained allied with the Soviet Union. During the 1950s and 1960s, however, growing protest movements in countries such as Poland (in 1952), Hungary (in 1956), and Czechoslovakia (in 1968) threatened the Soviet grip on the region. The Soviets clamped down hard on these protests. In addition, increasing tensions with China also diverted Soviet attention and forces.

Destalinization and Rumbings of Protest After Stalin died, **Nikita Khrushchev** became the dominant Soviet leader. In 1956, the shrewd, tough Khrushchev denounced Stalin for jailing and killing loyal Soviet citizens. His speech signaled the start of a policy called *destalinization*, or purging the country of Stalin's memory. Workers destroyed monuments to the former dictator. Khrushchev called for "peaceful competition" with capitalist states.

But this new Soviet outlook did not change life in the satellite countries. Their resentment at times turned to active protest. In October 1956, for example, the Hungarian army

joined protesters in an attempt to overthrow Hungary's Soviet-controlled government. Storming through the capital, Budapest, mobs waved Hungarian flags with the Communist hammer-and-sickle emblem cut out. "From the youngest child to the oldest man," one protester declared, "no one wants communism."

A popular and liberal Hungarian Communist leader named Imre Nagy (IHM•ray-nahj) formed a new government. Nagy promised free elections and demanded Soviet troops leave. In response, Soviet tanks and infantry entered Budapest in November. Thousands of Hungarian freedom fighters armed themselves with pistols and bottles but were overwhelmed. A pro-Soviet government was installed, and Nagy was eventually executed.

The Revolt in Czechoslovakia Despite the show of force in Hungary, Khrushchev lost prestige in his country as a result of the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962. In 1964, party leaders voted to remove him from power. His replacement, **Leonid Brezhnev**, quickly adopted repressive domestic

BIOGRAPHY



Imre Nagy
(1896–1958)

Imre Nagy was born into a peasant family in Hungary. During World War I, he was captured by the Soviets and recruited into their army. He then became a Communist.

Nagy held several posts in his country's Communist government, but his loyalty remained with the peasants. Because of his independent approach, he fell in and out of favor with the Soviet Union. In October 1956, he led an anti-Soviet revolt. After the Soviets forcefully put down the uprising, they tried and executed Nagy.

In 1989, after Communists lost control of Hungary's government, Nagy was reburied with official honors.



Czech demonstrators fight Soviet tanks in 1968.



Alexander Dubček
(1921–1992)

Alexander Dubček was the son of a Czech Communist Party member. He moved rapidly up through its ranks, becoming party leader in 1968.

Responding to the spirit of change in the 1960s, Dubček instituted broad reforms during the so-called Prague Spring of 1968. The Soviet Union reacted by sending tanks into Prague to suppress a feared

revolt. The Soviets expelled Dubček from the party. He regained political prominence in 1989, when the Communists agreed to share power in a coalition government. When Czechoslovakia split into two nations in 1992, Dubček became head of the Social Democratic Party in Slovakia.

policies. The party enforced laws to limit such basic human rights as freedom of speech and worship. Government censors controlled what writers could publish. Brezhnev clamped down on those who dared to protest his policies. For example, the secret police arrested many dissidents, including Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, winner of the 1970 Nobel Prize for literature. They then expelled him from the Soviet Union.

Brezhnev made clear that he would not tolerate dissent in Eastern Europe either. His policy was put to the test in early 1968. At that time, Czech Communist leader Alexander Dubček (DOOB•chehk) loosened controls on censorship to offer his country socialism with “a human face.” This period of reform, when Czechoslovakia’s capital bloomed with new ideas, became known as Prague Spring. However, it did not survive the summer. On August 20, armed forces from the Warsaw Pact nations invaded Czechoslovakia. Brezhnev justified this invasion by claiming the Soviet Union had the right to prevent its satellites from rejecting communism, a policy known as the Brezhnev Doctrine.

The Soviet-Chinese Split While many satellite countries resisted Communist rule, China was committed to communism. In fact, to cement the ties between Communist powers, Mao and Stalin had signed a 30-year treaty of friendship in 1950. Their spirit of cooperation, however, ran out before the treaty did.

The Soviets assumed the Chinese would follow Soviet leadership in world affairs. As the Chinese grew more confident, however, they resented being in Moscow’s shadow. They began to spread their own brand of communism in Africa and other parts of Asia. In 1959, Khrushchev punished the Chinese by refusing to share nuclear secrets. The following year, the Soviets ended technical economic aid. The Soviet-Chinese split grew so wide that fighting broke out along their common border. After repeated incidents, the two neighbors maintained a fragile peace.

From Brinkmanship to Détente

In the 1970s, the United States and the Soviet Union finally backed away from the aggressive policies of brinkmanship that they had followed during the early postwar years. The superpowers slowly moved to lower tensions.

Brinkmanship Breaks Down The brinkmanship policy followed during the presidencies of Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson led to one terrifying crisis after another. Though these crises erupted all over the world, they were united by a common fear. Nuclear war seemed possible. It was never certain, however, whether the possibility of nuclear attack was a real threat or was being used as a means to deter the other side from attacking.

In 1960, the U-2 incident prevented a meeting between the United States and the Soviet Union to discuss the buildup of arms on both sides. Then, during the administration of **John F. Kennedy** in 1962, the Cuban Missile Crisis made the superpowers’ use of nuclear weapons a real

Reading Check

Analyze Issues

Why was Nikita Khrushchev removed from power in 1964?

possibility. The crisis ended when Soviet ships turned back to avoid a confrontation at sea. “We’re eyeball to eyeball,” the relieved U.S. Secretary of State, Dean Rusk, said, “and I think the other fellow just blinked.” Luckily, the United States and the world had avoided the potential for a major war that Kennedy’s CIA Director John McCone predicted might occur:

“Consequences of action by the United States will be the inevitable ‘spilling of blood’ of Soviet military personnel. This will increase tension everywhere and undoubtedly bring retaliation against U.S. foreign military installations, where substantial U.S. casualties would result. . . .”

—John McCone, CIA director, in memo to President Kennedy

Tensions remained high. After the assassination of Kennedy in 1963, **Lyndon Johnson** assumed the presidency. Committed to stopping the spread of communism, President Johnson escalated U.S. involvement in the war in Vietnam.

The United States Turns to Détente Widespread popular protests wracked the United States during the Vietnam War. And the turmoil did not end with U.S. withdrawal. As it tried to heal its internal wounds, the United States backed away from its policy of direct confrontation with the Soviet Union. **Détente**, a policy of lessening Cold War tensions, replaced brinkmanship under **Richard M. Nixon**.

President Nixon’s move toward détente grew out of a philosophy known as *realpolitik*. This term comes from the German word meaning “realistic politics.” In practice, *realpolitik* meant dealing with other nations in a practical and flexible manner. While the United States continued to try

to contain the spread of communism, the two superpowers agreed to pursue détente and to reduce tensions.

Nixon and Brezhnev Sign SALT and ABM Treaties Nixon’s new policy represented a personal reversal as well as a political shift for the country. His rise in politics in the 1950s was largely due to his strong anti-Communist position. Twenty years later, he became the first U.S. president to visit Communist China. The visit made sense in a world in which three, not just two, superpowers eyed each other suspiciously. “We want the Chinese with us when we sit down and negotiate with the Russians,” Nixon explained.

Three months after visiting Beijing in February 1972, Nixon visited the Soviet Union. After a series of meetings called the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (**SALT**), Nixon and

Vocabulary
détente a French word meaning “a loosening”



U.S. President Nixon visits China in 1972, accompanied by Chinese premier Zhou Enlai (left).

Brezhnev signed the SALT I Treaty. This five-year agreement limited to 1972 levels the number of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) and submarine-launched missiles each country could have. The two sides also negotiated a treaty regulating the number of antiballistic missiles (ABMs) each country could maintain. ABMs could be used to destroy incoming ICBMs. The idea behind the ABM treaty was that with only a limited number of missiles, each country could protect only part of its territory. This would keep both sides fearful of each other and thus serve as a deterrent to nuclear war. In 1975, 33 nations joined the United States and the Soviet Union in signing a commitment to détente and cooperation, the Helsinki Accords.

The Collapse of Détente

Under Presidents Nixon and Gerald Ford, the United States improved relations with China and the Soviet Union. In the late 1970s, however, President Jimmy Carter was concerned over harsh treatment of protesters in the Soviet Union. This threatened to prevent a second round of SALT negotiations. In 1979, Carter and Brezhnev finally signed the SALT II agreement. When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan later that year, however, the U.S. Congress refused to ratify SALT II. Concerns mounted as more nations, including China and India, began building nuclear arsenals.



Ronald Reagan's 1980 political button highlights the strong patriotic theme of his campaign.

Reagan Takes an Anti-Communist Stance A fiercely anti-Communist U.S. president, **Ronald Reagan**, took office in 1981. His election was a high point in a new period in American politics known as the New Conservative or New Right era. The New Conservatives were opposed not only to communism but also to a variety of social and economic issues ranging from abortion to affirmative action (special treatment for minority members and women) to any increases in taxes.

Under Reagan, the United States continued to move away from détente. Reagan increased defense spending, putting both economic and military pressure on the Soviets. In 1983, Reagan also announced the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), a program to protect against enemy missiles. It was not put into effect but remained a symbol of U.S. anti-Communist sentiment. British prime minister **Margaret Thatcher**, who served as England's leader from 1979 to 1990, supported Reagan's policy. Her anti-Communist stance was so strong that Soviet reporters nicknamed her the "Iron Lady." Soon people in Great Britain also began using the nickname for their strong-willed leader.

Tensions increased as U.S. activities such as arming Nicaragua's Contras pushed the United States and Soviet Union further from détente. However, a change in Soviet leadership in 1985 brought a new policy toward the United States, economic and political changes in the Soviet Union, and

Reading Check

Contrast In what ways did Nixon's and Reagan's policies toward the Soviet Union differ?

the beginnings of a final thaw in the Cold War. This new policy, known as *perestroika* [pehr•ih•STROY•kuh], a Russian word meaning “restructuring,” led to a reduction of the power of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union and an expansion of economic opportunities for private businesses there. The country even allowed Soviet republics to establish their own congresses and hold elections with a choice of candidates. Within a few years the Soviet Union would disband, and the Cold War would end. Meanwhile, developing countries in Asia, Africa, and Latin America continued their own struggles for independence.

Lesson 5 Assessment

- 1. Organize Information** What do you consider the most significant reason for the collapse of détente?

I. Soviet Policy in Eastern Europe and China
A.
B.

II. From Brinkmanship to Detente
- 2. Key Terms and People** For each key term or person in the lesson, write a sentence explaining its significance.
- 3. Draw Conclusions** Why did protests of Soviet satellite countries probably begin after Stalin's death and not before?
- 4. Analyze Motives** Why was the policy of brinkmanship replaced?
- 5. Develop Historical Perspective** In view of Soviet policies toward Eastern Europe in the postwar era, what reasons did people in Eastern Europe have for resistance?
- 6. Evaluate Decisions** Do you think it was a wise political move for President Nixon to visit Communist China and the Soviet Union? Why or why not?
- 7. Recognize Effects** What was the result of Reagan's move away from détente?

Reading Check

Contrast How did the leadership of General Abacha and General Abubakar differ?

and economic growth. Yar'Adua also faced health problems through much of his presidency. After his death in 2010, his vice president, Goodluck Jonathan was sworn in as president. One of the most serious problems facing Jonathan has been Boko Haram, the Islamic militant group that has killed and kidnapped thousands in Nigeria.

South Africa Under Apartheid

In South Africa, racial conflict was the result of colonial rule. From its beginnings under Dutch and British control, South Africa was racially divided. A small white minority ruled a large black majority. In 1910, South Africa gained self-rule as a dominion of the British Empire. In 1931, it became an independent member of the British Commonwealth. Although South Africa had a constitutional government, the constitution gave whites power and denied the black majority its rights.

Apartheid Segregates Society In 1948, the National Party came to power in South Africa. This party promoted Afrikaner, or Dutch South African, nationalism. It also instituted a policy of **apartheid**, complete separation of the races. The minority government banned social contacts between whites and blacks. It established segregated schools, hospitals, and neighborhoods.

In 1959, the minority government set up reserves, called homelands, for the country's major black groups. Blacks were forbidden to live in white areas unless they worked as servants or laborers for whites. The homelands policy was totally unbalanced. Although blacks made up about 75 percent of the population, the government set aside only 13 percent of the land for them. Whites kept the best land.

Blacks Protest The blacks of South Africa resisted the controls imposed by the white minority. In 1912, they formed the African National Congress (ANC) to fight for their rights. The ANC organized strikes and boycotts to protest racist policies. The government banned the ANC and imprisoned many of its members. One was ANC leader **Nelson Mandela** (man•DEHL•uh).

The troubles continued. In 1976, riots over school policies broke out in the black township of Soweto, leaving about 600 students dead. In 1977, police beat popular protest leader Stephen Biko to death while he was in custody. As protests mounted, the government declared a nationwide state of emergency in 1986.

Struggle for Democracy

By the late 1980s, South Africa was under great pressure to change. For years, a black South African bishop, Desmond Tutu, had led an economic campaign against apartheid. He asked foreign nations not to do business with South Africa. In response, many nations imposed trade restrictions. They also isolated South Africa in other ways, for example, by banning South Africa from the Olympic Games. (In 1984, Tutu won the Nobel Peace Prize for his nonviolent methods.)

Reading Check

Make Inferences
How did the policy of apartheid strengthen whites' hold on power?

The First Steps In 1989, white South Africans elected a new president, F. W. de Klerk. His goal was to transform South Africa and end its isolation. In February 1990, he legalized the ANC and also released Nelson Mandela from prison.



A young South African poll worker helps an elderly man to vote in the first election open to citizens of all races.

These dramatic actions marked the beginning of a new era in South Africa. Over the next 18 months, the South African parliament repealed apartheid laws that had segregated public facilities and restricted land ownership by blacks. World leaders welcomed these changes and began to ease restrictions on South Africa.

Although some legal barriers had fallen, others would remain until a new constitution was in place. First, the country needed to form a multi-racial government. After lengthy negotiations, President de Klerk agreed to hold South Africa's first universal elections, in which people of all races could vote, in April 1994.

Majority Rule Among the candidates for president were F. W. de Klerk and Nelson Mandela. During the campaign, the Inkatha Freedom Party—a rival party to the ANC—threatened to disrupt the process. Nevertheless, the vote went smoothly. South Africans of all races peacefully waited at the polls in long lines. To no one's surprise, the ANC won 63 percent of the vote. They won 252 of 400 seats in the National Assembly (the larger of the two houses in Parliament). Mandela was elected president. Mandela stepped down in 1999, but the nation's democratic government continued.



Nelson Mandela (1918–2013)

Nelson Mandela said that he first grew interested in politics when he heard elders in his village describe how freely his people lived before whites came. Inspired

to help his people regain that freedom, Mandela trained as a lawyer and became a top official in the ANC. Convinced that apartheid would never end peacefully, he joined the armed struggle against white rule. For this, he was imprisoned for 27 years.

After his presidential victory, Mandela continued to work to heal his country.



F. W. de Klerk (1936–)

Like Mandela, Frederik W. de Klerk also trained as a lawyer. Born to an Afrikaner family with close links

to the National Party, de Klerk was elected to Parliament in 1972.

A firm party loyalist, de Klerk backed apartheid but was also open to reform. Friends say that his flexibility on racial issues stemmed from his relatively liberal religious background.

In 1993, de Klerk and Mandela were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to bring democracy to South Africa.



This was South Africa's flag from 1927 to 1994.



South Africa adopted this flag in 1994.

A New Constitution In 1996, after much debate, South African lawmakers passed a new, more democratic constitution. It guaranteed equal rights for all citizens. The constitution included a bill of rights modeled on the United States Bill of Rights. The political and social changes that South Africa had achieved gave other peoples around the world great hope for the future of democracy.

South Africa Today In 1999, ANC official Thabo Mbeki won the election as president in a peaceful transition of power. As Mbeki assumed office, he faced a number of serious challenges. These included high crime rates—South Africa's rape and murder rates were among the highest in the world. Unemployment stood at about 40 percent among South Africa's blacks, and about 60 percent lived below the poverty level. In addition, an economic downturn discouraged foreign investment.

Mbeki promoted a free-market economic policy to repair South Africa's infrastructure and to encourage foreign investors. Investing in the education and training of a nation's workforce can lead to economic growth. In 2002, South Africa was engaged in negotiations to establish free-trade agreements with a number of countries around the world, including those of the European Union as well as Japan, Canada, and the United States. This was an attempt at opening the South African economy to foreign competition and investment, and promoting growth and employment. Investing in the education and training of South Africans led to economic growth as well.



The Collapse of the Soviet Union

The Big Idea

Democratic reforms brought important changes to the Soviet Union.

Why It Matters Now

Russia continues to struggle to establish democracy.

Key Terms and People

Politburo

Mikhail Gorbachev

glasnost

perestroika

Boris Yeltsin

CIS

“shock therapy”

Setting the Stage

After World War II, the Soviet Union and the United States engaged in a cold war. Each tried to increase its worldwide influence. The Soviet Union extended its power over much of Eastern Europe. By the 1960s, it appeared that communism was permanently established in the region. During the 1960s and 1970s, the Soviet Union’s Communist leadership kept tight control over the Soviet people. But big changes, including democratic reforms, were on the horizon.

Gorbachev Moves Toward Democracy

Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev and the **Politburo**—the ruling committee of the Communist Party—crushed all political disagreement. Censors decided what writers could publish. The Communist Party also restricted freedom of speech and worship. After Brezhnev’s death in 1982, the aging leadership of the Soviet Union tried to hold on to power. However, each of Brezhnev’s two successors died after only about a year in office. Who would succeed them?

A Younger Leader To answer that question, the Politburo debated between two men. One was **Mikhail Gorbachev** (mih•KYL-GAWR•buh•chawf). Gorbachev’s supporters praised his youth, energy, and political skills. With their backing, Gorbachev became the party’s new general secretary. In choosing him, Politburo members did not realize they were unleashing another Russian Revolution.

The Soviet people welcomed Gorbachev’s election. At 54, he was the youngest Soviet leader since Stalin. Gorbachev was only a child during Stalin’s ruthless purge of independent-minded party members. Unlike other Soviet leaders, Gorbachev decided to pursue new ideas.

Glasnost

Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of glasnost and perestroika shook up the traditional way of doing things in the Soviet economy and in the society at large.

Analyze Historical Sources

1. One arrow points down the road toward stagnation. Where is the other arrow, pointing in the opposite direction, likely to lead?
2. Why might the Soviet Union look different to the figure in the cartoon?



Glasnost Promotes Openness Past Soviet leaders had created a totalitarian state. It rewarded silence and discouraged individuals from acting on their own. As a result, Soviet society rarely changed, and the Soviet economy stagnated. Gorbachev realized that economic and social reforms could not occur without a free flow of ideas and information. In 1985, he announced a policy known as **glasnost** (GLAHS•nuhst), or openness.

Glasnost brought remarkable changes. The government allowed churches to open. It released dissidents from prison and allowed the publication of books by previously banned authors. Reporters investigated problems and criticized officials. These changes helped to improve human rights for the Soviet people by giving them more freedom to do and say what they wanted.

Reforming the Economy and Politics

The new openness allowed Soviet citizens to complain about economic problems. Consumers protested that they had to stand in lines to buy food and other basics.

Economic Restructuring Gorbachev blamed these problems on the Soviet Union's inefficient system of central planning. Under central planning, party officials told farm and factory managers how much to produce. They also told them what wages to pay and what prices to charge. Because individuals could not increase their pay by producing more, they had little motive to improve efficiency.

In 1985, Gorbachev introduced the idea of **perestroika** (pehr•ih•STROY•kuh), or economic restructuring. In 1986, he made changes to revive the Soviet economy. Local managers gained greater authority over their farms and factories, and people were allowed to open small private businesses. Gorbachev's goal was not to throw out communism, but to make the economic system more efficient and productive.

Reading Check

Draw Conclusions

What effect would glasnost likely have on the public's opinion of Gorbachev?

Reading Check
Make Inferences
Why would it be inefficient for the central government to decide what should be produced all over the country?

Democratization Opens the Political System Gorbachev knew that for the economy to improve, the Communist Party would have to loosen its grip on Soviet society. In 1987, he unveiled a third new policy called democratization which was a gradual opening of the political system.

The plan called for the election of a new legislative body. In the past, voters had merely approved candidates who were handpicked by the Communist Party. Now, voters could choose from a list of candidates for each office. The election produced many surprises. In several places, voters chose lesser-known candidates and reformers over powerful party bosses.

Foreign Policy Soviet foreign policy also changed, in part due to President Ronald Reagan's strong anti-Soviet views. Reagan famously called the Soviet Union "an evil empire" during a speech in 1983. To compete militarily with the Soviet Union, Reagan had begun the most expensive military buildup in peacetime history, costing more than \$2 trillion. Under pressure from U.S. military spending, Gorbachev realized that the Soviet economy could not afford the costly arms race. Arms control became one of Gorbachev's top priorities. In December 1987, he and Reagan signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty. This treaty banned nuclear missiles with ranges of 300 to 3,400 miles.

The Soviet Union Faces Turmoil

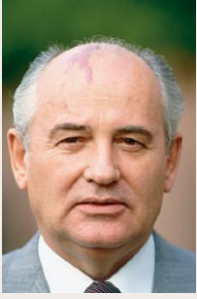
Gorbachev's new thinking led him to support movements for change in both the economic and political systems within the Soviet Union. Powerful forces for democracy were building in the country, and Gorbachev decided not to oppose reform. Glasnost, perestroika, and democratization were all means to reform the system. However, the move to reform the Soviet Union ultimately led to its breakup.

Various nationalities in the Soviet Union began to call for their freedom. More than 100 ethnic groups lived in the Soviet Union. Russians were the largest, most powerful group. However, non-Russians formed a majority in the 14 Soviet republics other than Russia.

Ethnic tensions brewed beneath the surface of Soviet society. As reforms loosened central controls, unrest spread across the country. Nationalist groups in Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldavia (now Moldova) demanded self-rule. The Muslim peoples of Soviet Central Asia called for religious freedom.

Lithuania Defies Gorbachev The first challenge came from the Baltic nations of Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia. These republics had been independent states between the two world wars until the Soviets annexed them in 1940. Fifty years later, in March 1990, Lithuania declared its independence. To try to force it back into the Soviet Union, Gorbachev ordered an economic blockade of the republic.

Although Gorbachev was reluctant to use stronger measures, he feared that Lithuania's example might encourage other republics to secede. In January 1991, Soviet troops attacked unarmed civilians in Lithuania's capital. The army killed 14 and wounded hundreds.



Mikhail Gorbachev
(1931–)

Mikhail Gorbachev's background shaped the role he would play in history. Both of his grandfathers were arrested during Stalin's purges. Both were eventually

freed. However, Gorbachev never forgot his grandfathers' stories.

After working on a state farm, Gorbachev studied law in Moscow and joined the Communist Party. As an official in a farming region, Gorbachev learned much about the Soviet system and its problems.

He advanced quickly in the party. When he became general secretary in 1985, he was the youngest Politburo member and a man who wanted to bring change. He succeeded. Although he pursued reform to save the Soviet Union, ultimately he triggered its breakup.



Boris Yeltsin
(1931–2007)

Boris Yeltsin was raised in poverty. For ten years, his family lived in a single room.

As a youth, Yeltsin earned good grades but behaved badly. Mikhail Gorbachev

named him party boss and mayor of Moscow in 1985. Yeltsin's outspokenness got him into trouble. At one meeting, he launched into a bitter speech criticizing conservatives for working against perestroika. Gorbachev fired him for the sake of party unity.

Yeltsin made a dramatic comeback and won a seat in parliament in 1989. Parliament elected him president of Russia in 1990, and voters reelected him in 1991. Due at least in part to his failing health (heart problems), Yeltsin resigned in 1999.

Yeltsin Denounces Gorbachev The assault in Lithuania and the lack of economic progress damaged Gorbachev's popularity. People looked for leadership to **Boris Yeltsin**. He was a member of parliament and former mayor of Moscow. Yeltsin criticized the crackdown in Lithuania and the slow pace of reforms. In June 1991, voters chose Yeltsin to become the Russian Federation's first directly elected president.

In spite of their rivalry, Yeltsin and Gorbachev faced a common enemy in the old guard of Communist officials. Hardliners—conservatives who opposed reform—were furious that Gorbachev had given up the Soviet Union's role as the dominant force in Eastern Europe. They also feared losing their power and privileges. These officials vowed to overthrow Gorbachev and undo his reforms.

The August Coup On August 18, 1991, the hardliners detained Gorbachev at his vacation home on the Black Sea. They demanded his resignation as Soviet president. Early the next day, hundreds of tanks and armored vehicles rolled into Moscow. However, the Soviet people had lost their fear of the party. They were willing to defend their freedoms. Protesters gathered at the Russian parliament building, where Yeltsin had his office.

Around midday, Yeltsin emerged and climbed atop one of the tanks. As his supporters cheered, he declared, "We proclaim all decisions and decrees of this committee to be illegal. . . . We appeal to the citizens of Russia to . . . demand a return of the country to normal constitutional developments."

On August 20, the hardliners ordered troops to attack the parliament building, but they refused. Their refusal turned the tide. On August 21, the military withdrew its forces from Moscow. That night, Gorbachev returned to Moscow.

End of the Soviet Union The coup attempt sparked anger against the Communist Party. Gorbachev resigned as general secretary of the party. The Soviet parliament voted to stop all party activities. Having first seized power in 1917 in a coup that succeeded, the Communist Party now collapsed because of a coup that failed.

The coup also played a decisive role in accelerating the breakup of the Soviet Union. Estonia and Latvia quickly declared their independence. Other republics soon followed. Although Gorbachev pleaded for unity, no one was listening. By early December, all 15 republics had declared independence.

Yeltsin met with the leaders of other republics to chart a new course. They agreed to form the Commonwealth of Independent States, or **CIS**, a loose federation of former Soviet territories. Only the Baltic republics (also called states) and Georgia declined to join. The formation of the CIS meant the death of the Soviet Union. It also signaled the end of the Cold War. On Christmas Day 1991, Gorbachev announced his resignation as president of the Soviet Union, a country that ceased to exist. Fifteen new countries, including Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and the Baltic States, formed in its place.

Reading Check

Analyze Motives

Why do you think the Soviet troops refused the order to attack the parliament building?

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The Breakup of the Soviet Union, 1991



Interpret Maps

- Place** What are the 15 republics of the former Soviet Union?
- Region** Which republic received the largest percentage of the former Soviet Union's territory?

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights contains thirty articles that explain the political, economic, and cultural rights of all people.

“Article 1: *All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.*

Article 2: *Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.*

Article 3: *Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.*

Article 4: *No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms.*

Article 5: *No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. . . .”*

—quoted from *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights*

Analyze Historical Sources

How are some of the words and ideas expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights similar to other historical declarations?

Human Rights Issues

In 1948, the UN issued the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, which set human rights standards for all nations. The declaration listed specific rights, such as the right to liberty and the right to work, that all human beings should have. Later, in the Helsinki Accords of 1975, the UN addressed the issues of freedom of movement and freedom to publish and exchange information.

Both the declaration and the accords are **nonbinding agreements**. A nonbinding agreement means that a nation does not suffer a penalty if it does not meet the terms of the declaration. However, the sentiments in these documents inspired many people around the world. They made a commitment to ensuring that basic human rights are respected. The UN and other private international agencies, such as Amnesty International, identify and publicize human rights violations. They also encourage people to work toward a world in which liberty and justice are guaranteed for all.

Some of the greatest human rights successes have come in the area of political rights and freedoms. In Europe, most countries that were once

History in Depth

Human Rights Movements

Human rights movements resisting colonialism, imperialism, slavery, racism, apartheid, patriarchy, and other abuses have reshaped political, social, and economic life around the world. A human rights movement is a social movement that responds to human rights issues. Many national and international government organizations and NGOs have been dedicated to such movements, and the most successful campaigns usually involve a number of organizations working together for a common goal.

Recognizing this, the National Economic and Social Rights Initiative (NESRI) decided to work with many community organizations across the United States. Founded in 2004, NESRI organizes and supports initiatives to integrate social and economic rights into American laws and political culture. Economic and social rights include access to safe work with fair wages; affordable, quality health care; education; nutritious food; and safe, affordable housing.

Analyze Issues

Which human rights does NESRI promote in the United States?

Vocabulary

nongovernmental organization

a nonprofit group set up by private citizens, businesses, or groups

part of the Soviet bloc have opened up their political systems to allow for democratic elections and the free expression of ideas. There have been similar successes in South Africa, where the apartheid system of racial separation came to an end in the early 1990s. Free elections held in South Africa in 1994 finally brought a multiracial government to power.

Combatting Human Rights Abuses Many multinational organizations combat human rights abuses. Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch research and publicize abuses and campaign to end them. Human Rights Watch's annual world reports detail human rights issues and policy developments around the globe, and the organization works with governments and institutions to promote human rights in more than 90 countries and territories. These and other NGOs have played key roles in the fights against slavery, violence against women, and apartheid. Other groups such as the International Red Cross and Red Crescent are charitable NGOs that offer free assistance to people in times of crisis.

Intergovernmental organizations also play a role. The International Criminal Court (ICC), housed in the Netherlands, prosecutes individuals for genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes. By 2015, the ICC had investigated nine situations, including the human rights violations in Darfur.

Continuing Rights Violations Despite the best efforts of various human rights organizations, protecting human rights remains an uphill battle. Serious violations of fundamental rights continue to occur around the world.

Mother Teresa (1910–1997)

Mother Teresa was one of the great champions of human rights for all people. Born Agnes Gonxha Bojaxhiu in what today is Macedonia, Mother Teresa joined a convent in Ireland at the age of 18. A short time later, she headed to India to teach at a girls' school. Over time, she noticed many sick and homeless people in the streets. She soon vowed to devote her life to helping India's poor.

In 1948, she established the Order of the Missionaries of Charity in Calcutta, which committed itself to serving the sick, needy, and unfortunate. In recognition of her commitment to the downtrodden, Mother Teresa received the Nobel Peace Prize in 1979.

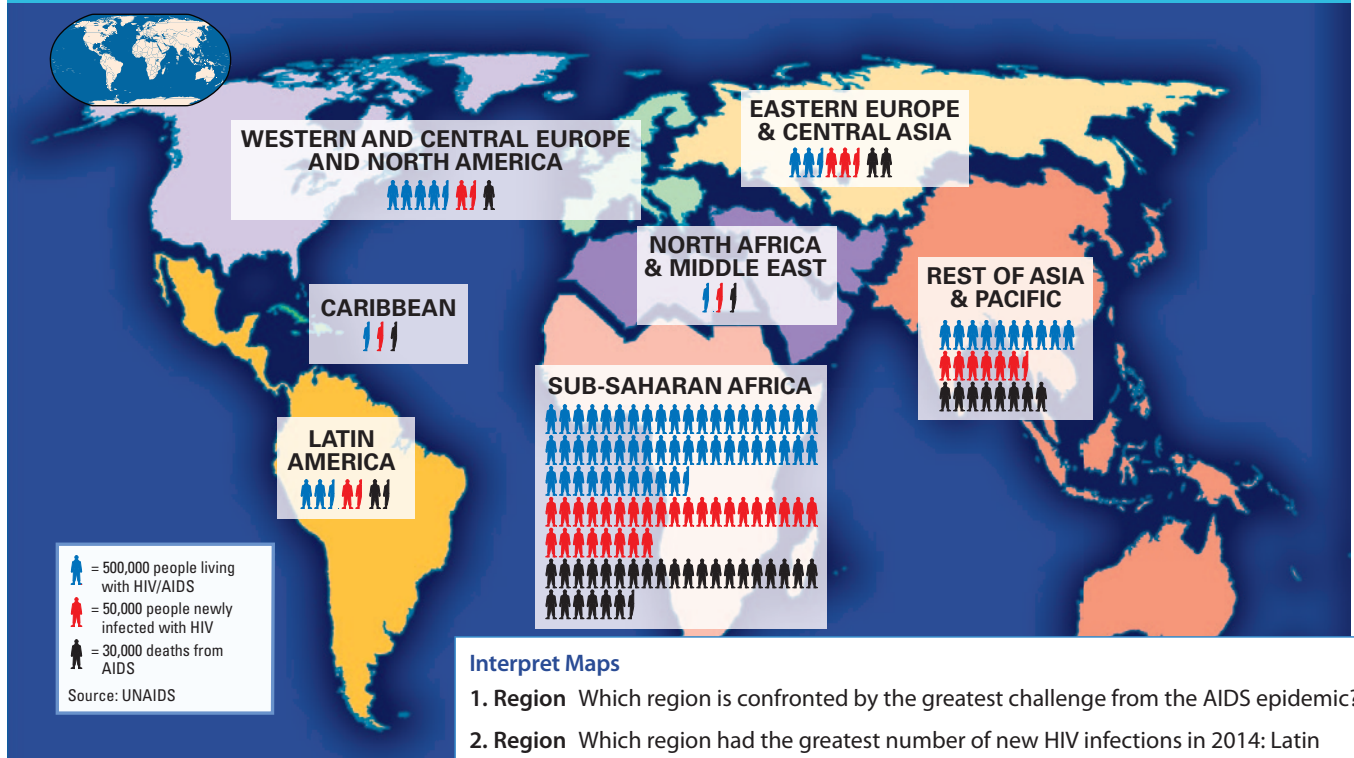


One type of violation occurs when governments try to stamp out **political dissent**, or the difference of opinion over political issues. In many countries around the world, from Cuba to Iran to Myanmar, individuals and groups have been persecuted for holding political views that differ from those of the people in power. In some countries, like Sudan, ethnic or racial hatreds lead to human rights abuses.

Women's Status Improves In the past, when women in Western nations entered the workforce, they often faced discrimination in employment and salary. In non-Western countries, many women not only faced discrimination in jobs, they were denied access to education. In regions torn by war or ethnic conflict, women have often been victims of violence and abuse. As women suffered, so have their family members, especially children.

In the 1970s, a heightened awareness of human rights encouraged women in many countries to work to improve their lives. They pushed for new laws and government policies that gave them greater equality. In 1975, the UN held the first of several international conferences on women's status in the world. The UN also sponsored a movement toward gender equality, and most countries signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979). In Southeast Asia, all but a few nations, such as Vietnam and Laos, have ratified the treaty. The fourth conference was held in Beijing, China, in 1995. It addressed such issues as preventing violence against women and empowering women to take leadership roles in politics and in business.

World AIDS Situation, 2014



Reading Check

Analyze Issues

What responsibilities do nations have for protecting human rights in other countries?

In its report *Progress of the World's Women 2015–2016*, the UN found that women had made notable gains in many parts of the world, especially in the areas of education and work. Even so, the report concluded that **gender inequality**—the difference between men and women in terms of wealth and status—still very much exists. It cites discrimination in health care, political representation, employment, and education as reasons for the continued imbalance between men and women.

Health Issues

In recent decades, the enjoyment of a decent standard of health has become recognized as a basic human right. However, for much of the world, poor health is the norm. World health faced a major threat in 2003, with the outbreak of severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). This pneumonia-like disease emerged in China and spread worldwide. Afraid of infection, many people canceled travel to Asia. The resulting loss of business hurt Asian economies.

The AIDS Epidemic One of the greatest global health issues is a disease known as **AIDS**, or acquired immune deficiency syndrome. It attacks the immune system, leaving sufferers open to deadly infections. The disease was first detected in the early 1980s. Since that time, AIDS has become a global pandemic: it has claimed the lives of nearly 39 million people worldwide. By the end of 2014, there were almost 37 million people across the world living with HIV (the virus that causes AIDS) or AIDS. And in 2014, two million people were newly infected with HIV.

Vocabulary

pandemic an infectious disease that spreads through a human population in a widespread geographic area