



The End of the Cold War



General Overview

- The end of the cold war, turning point
- in the structures of international politics,
- in the roles and functions of nation states,
- and in international organizations

Why did the Cold War come to an end?



- Collapse of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe
- External pressures: the policies of the US
- Growing economic disadvantage of the Soviet Union
- Policies and personality of Gorbachev
- Historical and systemic factors in the international environment



Importance of the end of the Cold War

- The collapse of the Iron Curtain (Berlin Wall) and the dismantling of the Soviet Union represent a turning point:
 - 1. It marks the end of the bipolar structure, based on US-Soviet rivalry, which the international system had assumed after the Second World War.



Importance of the end of the Cold War

- 2. Important Changes took place at the level of nation state:
- All states, big or small, had to redefine their national interests according to the changes that occurred in the international balance of power.
- Former communist states experience serious problems of transition, ranging from economic collapse (Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Yugoslavia) to the disintegration of the state itself.

Importance of the end of the Cold War



- 3. The end of the Cold war also changed the role of international organizations:
- The end of the automatic split of the UN Security Council. The US and the Soviet Union used to veto against each other's proposals. Thus, the end of the Soviet-American rivalry removed an obstacle to collective decision-making within the UN.
- It also affected another important international organization, NATO.



Change in Domestic Politics

- Domestic politics also underwent major transformation. Moral and cultural issues (such as drugs, abortion) or environmental problems replaced ideological and security issues.

The Factors that Ended Cold War



- It was sudden and came as a surprise to most Western experts, political leaders, and the public.
- 1. internal factors, the collapse of communism in the Soviet System:
 - -A new era started in the Soviet Union with Gorbachev's accession to power in March 1985. Gorbachev was not loyal to Stalin's legacy. His power base advocated change.



Gorbachev and the Change

- Despite his reforms such as Glasnost and Perestroika, Gorbachev did not aim at dismantling the Soviet Union. He was anti-Stalinist, but not anti-socialist. Then how can we explain the dissolution of the Soviet Union?

Long-term factors:



- -Structural weaknesses of the command economy which relied on inflexible central planning, rewarded gross output of goods rather than productivity, and offered disincentives to innovation in management and production techniques.
- In place of a market relation between consumer demand and supply, the center dictated what kind of goods should be produced and at what prices. The priority was given to heavy industry at the expense of consumer goods.



Long-terms factors:

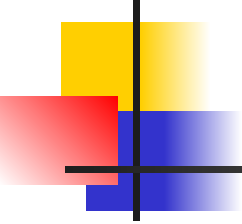
- -Structural weaknesses of the command economy:
 - 1. inflexible central planning system: Although the Soviet union was economically successful in the 1930s, such success came at enormous human cost. In the 1950s, Soviet growth rates exceeded Western countries except Germany and Japan. The Soviet Union launched Sputnik ahead of the US. This reflects the then dynamism of the Soviet economy. Khrushchev announced in 1960 that he expected the Soviet economy would overtake American economy in ten years. However, with the computer and automation revolution, Soviet Union lagged behind the Western countries (except the military sector)
 - 2. inability to modernize
 - 3. inefficiency of the agriculture sector

Isolation from the world economic system

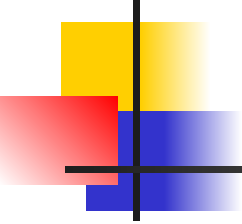


- The isolation of the Soviet Union and the communist bloc from capitalist bloc. This separation was symbolized with the refusal of the Soviet union to participate in the US Marshall Plan for post-war reconstruction. The conditions for participation involved opening the Soviet bloc to western investment. This would undermine the autonomy of the Soviet system. This isolation from the world economic system was one of the reasons that brought the end of the Soviet system.
- Soviet growth rates slowed in the 1960s and fell sharply in the 1970s and 1980s. The Soviet Union could not catch up with the developments that occurred in the West.
-
- If so, how could the Soviet Union survive so long, and why did these problems become important in the mid-1980s?

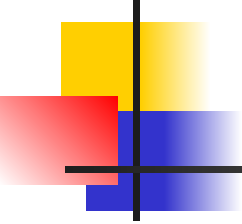
How could the Soviet Union survive so long?

- 
-
- Survival was possible economically because the Soviet economy performed well in heavy industry and the production of military equipment.
 - It also had large reserves of oil and natural gas.
 - Politically, the Communist Party promoted the idea of collective sacrifice.

Why did these problems become important in the mid-1980s?

- 
-
- Short-term factors:
 - Economic stagnation in the 1970s and 1980s
 - Poor harvest in the late 1970s and early 1980s
 - Gorbachev's political and economic reforms

Gorbachev's political and economic reforms

- 
-
- Gorbachev wanted to conduct his reforms by taking the consent of the Soviet people. He was against the use of coercion.
 - Glasnost (openness): It aimed at generating public support for Gorbachev's reforms. But once controls on mass media were loosened, control of public opinion became impossible. Freedom of expression prepared the ground for the dissolution of the Soviet Union.



Perestroika (Restructuring)

- Perestroika (restructuring) refers to the restructuring of the Soviet political and economic system.
- Political reforms:
- Gorbachev began a series of political reforms that were resisted by many established members of the communist party. However, he insisted on democratization.
- The Communist Party's privileged position was guaranteed by article 6 of the Soviet Constitution.
- Fundamental change in the balance of political forces within the Soviet state: Major changes were proposed in the 19th Party Congress in June 1988. Gorbachev and his supporters launched radical reforms to reduce party control of the government apparatus.



Perestroika (Restructuring)

- In the 1989 elections, huge numbers of Communist candidates could not enter the Parliament. The political system was transformed with the participation of new members that were elected by the people.
- The erosion of the integrative force of the Communist Party transformed the dynamics of the political institutions at the centre but also threatened the structure of the Soviet Union itself.
- In the summer of 1989, the first opposition bloc formed under the name of the Interregional Group. The members of this body included almost all of the liberal and Russian nationalist members of the opposition led by Boris Yeltsin.



Economic Reforms

- Partial move towards a free market:
- In 1987, the legalization of private farming and business co-operatives.
- In 1988, the Enterprise Law granted limited freedom to managers of state enterprises to sell some part of their products on the open market rather than to sell them to the government.
- The Law on Joint Ventures allowed foreign companies ownership of enterprises in the Soviet Union (initially 49%, then it was increased to 100%).



Results of Reforms

- Inflation, shortages, and declining harvest
- Rising crime rates, social unrest, and general uncertainty for the future



Human Rights Issue in the Collapse of Communism

- The human rights provision of the Helsinki Accords agreed at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (1975): Helsinki accords was an attempt to improve the relations between the Communist bloc and the West.
- Non-governmental Organizations were developed to monitor the compliance of Eastern European countries with the Helsinki Treaty. This detente period agreement was important in the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe.



Helsinki Accords (Helsinki Declaration)

- Sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty
- Refraining from the threat or use of force
- Inviolability of frontiers
- Territorial integrity of states
- Peaceful settlement of disputes
- Non-intervention in internal affairs
- Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief
- Fulfilment of obligations under international law.

The Collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe



- The destruction of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 marks the the collapse of communism in Eastern Europe.
- The communist regime was imposed on these countries by the Soviet Union. They had to maintain communist regimes due to the threat of Soviet intervention.
- Two factors that accelerated collapse of communism in Eastern Europe:
 - The sources of opposition to communist rule;
 - the Soviet Union's decision not to intervene to independence movements



Rise of 'Solidarity' in Poland

- 'Solidarity' emerged in 1980 in Poland and was supported by the majority of Polish people.
- It was the first non-communist trade union federation in a communist country.
- In the 1980s it constituted a broad anti-communist social movement.
- It proposed a referendum on Polish membership to the WTO and on the principle of one-party rule.
- Soviet military intervention was prevented by the emergence of a new Russian-oriented leader that banned Solidarity in 1981.



Rise of 'Solidarity' in Poland

- In the 1980s, the Catholic Church carried on public opposition like Solidarity did.
- Solidarity's influence led to the intensification and spread of anti-communist ideals and movements throughout the countries of the Eastern Bloc, weakening their communist governments.
- The 1989 elections in Poland where anti-communist candidates won a striking victory reflects a peaceful anti-communist revolution.

Political Leaders Change in Hungary and Poland



- In 1988, the opposition party in Hungary forced the removal of the Communist Party leader.
- In 1989, Poland repealed the ban on Solidarity and elections were held. Solidarity won the elections.
- In 1989, due to massive popular protest in Czechoslovakia, the government fell and Vaclav Havel was elected president.
- In Romania, President Ceausescu tried to destroy popular opposition by using force. In 1989, he was captured and executed.
- These changes could be made in Eastern Europe because Gorbachev abandoned the Brezhnev Doctrine of limited sovereignty for Eastern Europe. Thus, there was no Soviet threat or use of force against these countries.

External Factors: Relations with the US



- Republican Party argued that it was President Reagan's tough stance towards the Soviet Union was decisive in bringing about the collapse of communism.
- The nuclear arms race forced the Soviet Union either to match the West and bankrupt itself or negotiate reductions in nuclear arms. Gorbachev chose the second option. He signed the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty in 1987, unilaterally reduced its conventional forces and signed Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) in 1991. Without these agreements, Gorbachev could not fund his domestic reforms.



Different Approaches about the Role of the US: Internal Factors

- Raymond Garthoff in his book 'The Great Transition' argued that the West did not win the Cold War through geopolitical containment and military deterrence. Instead victory came when a generation of new leaders in Soviet Union realized how badly their system at home and their policies had failed.
- Another argument is put forward by Richard Lebow and Janet Stein. They argued that Reagan's policies did not end the Cold War, but actually delayed it.
- These authors argued that internal factors were responsible for the end of the Cold War.



Implications of the End of the Cold war: Optimist View

- The end of the cold war removed the structural and ideological conditions that led to superpower conflicts for more than 40 years.
- Some optimist scholars expected a new world order in which American power, in concert with other members of the UN Security Council, would serve as a global stabilizer. For instance, Charles Krauthammer argued about the emergence of an unipolar system based on American power.
- The Gulf War of 1991 was taken by optimist scholars to be the model for a new type of collective international action. The UN, with a strong US support, would act as a genuine collective organization.



Implications of the End of the Cold war: Peace Dividend

- The end of the cold war would also bring 'peace dividend' which is a political slogan popularized by US President George Bush and UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher in the early 1990s to describe the financial benefit of a decrease in defense spending. Countries would devote resources on domestic growth rather than on military spending.



Implications of the End of the Cold war: Pessimist View

- Pessimist scholars argued that cold war served to stabilize international politics. For them it fostered the long peace of the post-war years, the absence of war between major powers. Thus, for them, the end of the cold war was a destabilizing event. They expected chaos and violence in Eastern Europe and Turkic Republics that were under the control of the Soviet Union.

Implications of the End of the Cold war : Multi-polarity vs.Unipolarity



- Some scholars described the new structure of the international system as multipolar, based three major economic blocs: NAFTA, the European Union, and ASEAN.
- Some other scholars argued for the emergence of a unipolar system.