

CHAPTER PREVIEW

- Why did the postwar consensus of the 1950s break down?
- What were the consequences of economic stagnation in the 1970s?
- What led to the decline of “developed socialism” in the East Bloc?
- What were the causes and consequences of the 1989 revolutions in the East Bloc?

Life in a Divided Europe

Watchtowers, armed guards, and minefields controlled the Communist eastern side of the Berlin Wall, a significant symbol of Cold War division in Europe. In the liberal West, to the contrary, ordinary folk turned what was an easily accessible blank wall into an ad hoc art gallery—whimsical graffiti art, like the examples pictured here, covered the western side of the wall. (Bernd Kammerer/picture-alliance/dpa/akg-images)

Why did the postwar consensus of the 1950s break down?

In the early 1960s politics and society in prosperous western Europe remained relatively stable. East Bloc governments, bolstered by modest economic growth and state-enforced political conformity, and committed to generous welfare benefits for their citizens, maintained control. As the 1960s progressed, politics in the West shifted noticeably to the left, and amid this more liberalized society, a youthful counterculture emerged to critique the status quo. In the East Bloc, Khrushchev's limited reforms also inspired rebellions. Thus activists around the world rose in protest against the perceived inequalities of both capitalism and communism, leading to dramatic events in 1968, exemplified in Paris and Prague.

Cold War Tensions Thaw

In western Europe, the first two decades of postwar reconstruction had been overseen for the most part by center-right Christian Democrats, who successfully maintained postwar stability around Cold War politics, free-market economics with limited state intervention, and welfare provisions. In the mid- to late 1960s, buoyed by the rapidly expanding economy, much of western Europe moved politically to the left. Socialists entered the Italian government in 1963. In Britain, the Labour Party returned to power in 1964, after thirteen years in opposition. In West

Germany, the aging postwar chancellor Konrad Adenauer (1876–1967) retired in 1963, and in 1969 Willy Brandt (1913–1992) became the first Social Democratic West German chancellor; his party would govern Germany until 1982. There were important exceptions to this general trend. Though the tough-minded, independent French president Charles de Gaulle resigned in 1969, the centrist Gaullists remained in power in France until 1981. And in Spain, Portugal, and Greece, authoritarian regimes remained in power until the mid-1970s.

Despite these exceptions, the general leftward drift eased Cold War tensions. Western European leaders took major steps to normalize relations with the East Bloc. Willy Brandt took the lead. In December 1970 he flew to Poland for the signing of a historic treaty of reconciliation. In a dramatic moment, Brandt laid a wreath at the tomb of the Polish unknown soldier and another at the monument commemorating the armed uprising of Warsaw's Jewish ghetto against occupying Nazi armies. Standing before the ghetto memorial, a somber Brandt fell to his knees as if in prayer. "I wanted," Brandt said later, "to ask pardon in the name of our people for a million-fold crime which was committed in the misused name of the Germans."¹

Brandt's gesture at the Warsaw Ghetto memorial and the treaty with Poland were part of his broader, conciliatory foreign policy termed **Ostpolitik**

A West German Leader Apologizes for the Holocaust
In 1970 West German chancellor Willy Brandt knelt before the Jewish Heroes' Monument in Warsaw, Poland, to ask forgiveness for the German mass murder of European Jews and other groups during the Second World War. Brandt's action, captured in photo and film by the onlooking press, symbolized the chancellor's policy of Ostpolitik, the normalization of relations between the East and West Blocs. (bpk, Bildagentur/Hanns Hubmann/Art Resource, NY)



TIMELINE

1960	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
■ 1961 Building of Berlin Wall suggests permanence of the East Bloc	■ 1968 Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia; "May Events" protests in France	■ 1971 Founding of Greenpeace	■ 1973 OPEC oil embargo	■ 1975 Helsinki Accords	■ 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev named Soviet premier	■ 1987 United States and Soviet Union sign arms reduction treaty
1962–1965 Second Vatican Council				■ 1979 Margaret Thatcher becomes British prime minister; founding of West German Green Party; Soviet invasion of Afghanistan		■ 1989 Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan
■ 1963 Wolf publishes <i>Divided Heaven</i> ; Friedan publishes <i>The Feminine Mystique</i>					■ 1989–1991 Fall of communism in eastern Europe	■ December 1991 Dissolution of the Soviet Union
■ 1964 Civil Rights Act in the United States		■ 1964–1973 Peak of U.S. involvement in Vietnam War				
	■ 1966 Formation of National Organization for Women (NOW)					

(German for “Eastern policy”). Brandt sought a comprehensive peace settlement for central Europe and the two postwar German states. Rejecting West Germany’s official hard line toward the East Bloc, the chancellor negotiated new treaties with the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia, as well as Poland, that formally accepted existing state boundaries—rejected by West Germany’s government since 1945—in return for a mutual renunciation of force or the threat of force. Using the imaginative formula of “two German states within one German nation,” he broke decisively with past policy and opened direct relations with East Germany.

Brandt’s Ostpolitik was part of a general relaxation of East-West tensions, termed **détente** (day-TAHNT), that began in the early 1970s. Though Cold War hostilities continued in the developing world, diplomatic relations between the United States and the Soviet Union grew less strained. The superpowers agreed to limit the testing and proliferation of nuclear weapons and in 1975 mounted a joint U.S.-U.S.S.R. space mission.

The move toward détente reached a high point in 1975 when the United States, Canada, the Soviet Union, and all European nations (except isolationist Albania and tiny Andorra) met in Helsinki to sign the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe. Under what came to be called the Helsinki Accords, the thirty-five participating nations agreed that Europe’s existing political frontiers could

not be changed by force. They accepted numerous provisions guaranteeing the civil rights and political freedoms of their citizens, and the agreement helped diminish Cold War conflict. Although Communist regimes would continue to curtail domestic freedoms and violate human rights guarantees, the accords encouraged East Bloc dissidents, who could now demand that their governments respect international declarations on human rights. (See “Evaluating Written Evidence: Human Rights Under the Helsinki Accords,” page 906.)

Newly empowered center-left leaders in western Europe also pushed through reforms at home. Building on the benefit programs established in the 1950s, they increased state spending on public services even further. Center-left politicians did not advocate “socialism” as practiced in the Soviet bloc, where strict economic planning, the nationalization of key economic sectors, and one-party dictatorships ensured state control. To the contrary, they maintained a firm commitment to capitalist free markets and democracy. At the same time, they viewed state-sponsored benefits as a way to ameliorate the inequalities of a competitive market economy. As a result, western European

■ **Ostpolitik** German for Chancellor Willy Brandt’s new “Eastern policy”; West Germany’s attempt in the 1970s to ease diplomatic tensions with East Germany, exemplifying the policies of détente.

■ **détente** The progressive relaxation of Cold War tensions that emerged in the early 1970s.

Human Rights Under the Helsinki Accords

At the conclusion of the two-year-long Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (1973–1975), the representatives of thirty-five West and East Bloc states solemnly pledged to “respect each other’s sovereign equality” and to “refrain from any intervention, direct or indirect . . . in the internal or external affairs . . . of another participating state.” East Bloc leaders, pleased that the West had at last officially accepted the frontiers and territorial integrity of the Communist satellite states established after World War II, agreed to recognize a lengthy list of “civil, political, economic, social, cultural and other rights and freedoms.”



Principle VII on Human Rights and Freedoms, from the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (August 1, 1975)

VII. Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief

The participating States will respect human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief, for all without distinction as to race, sex, language or religion.

They will promote and encourage the effective exercise of civil, political, economic, social, cultural and other rights and freedoms all of which derive from the inherent dignity of the human person and are essential for his free and full development.

Within this framework the participating States will recognize and respect the freedom of the individual to profess and practice, alone or in community with others, religion or belief acting in accordance with the dictates of his own conscience.

The participating States on whose territory national minorities exist will respect the right of persons belonging to such minorities to equality before the law, will afford them the full opportunity for the actual enjoyment of

human rights and fundamental freedoms and will, in this manner, protect their legitimate interests in this sphere.

The participating States recognize the universal significance of human rights and fundamental freedoms, respect for which is an essential factor for the peace, justice and well-being necessary to ensure the development of friendly relations and co-operation among themselves as among all States.

They will constantly respect these rights and freedoms in their mutual relations and will endeavor jointly and separately, including in co-operation with the United Nations, to promote universal and effective respect for them.

They confirm the right of the individual to know and act upon his rights and duties in this field.

In the field of human rights and fundamental freedoms, the participating States will act in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They will also fulfill their obligations as set forth in the international declarations and agreements in this field, including *inter alia* the International Covenants on Human Rights, by which they may be bound.

EVALUATE THE EVIDENCE

1. How do the Helsinki Accords express the guiding principles of liberal democracy?
2. Why would Communist representatives publicly agree to recognize a list of rights that clearly challenged many of the repressive aspects of one-party rule in the East Bloc?

Source: “The Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, Aug. 1, 1975, 14 I.L.M. 1292 (Helsinki Declaration),” University of Minnesota Civil Rights Library, <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/osce/basics/finact75.htm>.

democracies spent more and more state funds on health care, education, old-age insurance, and public housing, all paid for with high taxes.

By the early 1970s state spending on such programs hovered around 40 percent of the gross domestic product in France, West Germany, and Great Britain, and even more in Scandinavia and the Netherlands. Center-right politicians generally supported increased spending on entitlements—as long as the economy prospered. The economic downturn in the mid-1970s, however, undermined support for the welfare state consensus (see ahead).

The Affluent Society

While politics shifted to the left in the 1960s, Europe entered a decade of economic growth and high wages, which meant that an expanding middle class could increasingly enjoy the benefits of the consumer revolution that began in the 1950s. Yet this so-called age of affluence had clear limits. The living standards of workers and immigrants did not rise as fast as those of the educated middle classes, and the expanding economy did not always reach underdeveloped regions, such as southern Italy. The 1960s nonetheless brought

general prosperity to millions, and the consolidation of a full-blown consumer society had a profound impact on daily life.

Many Europeans now had more money to spend on leisure time and recreational pursuits, which encouraged the growth of the tourist industry. With month-long paid vacations required by law in most western European countries and widespread automobile ownership, travel to beaches and ski resorts came within the reach of the middle class and much of the working class. By the late 1960s packaged tours with cheap group airfares and bargain hotel accommodations had made even distant lands easily accessible.

Consumerism also changed life at home. Household appliances that were still luxuries in the 1950s were now commonplace; televisions overtook radio as a popular form of domestic entertainment while vacuum cleaners, refrigerators, and washing machines transformed women's housework. Studies later showed that these new "labor-saving devices" caused women to spend even more time cleaning and cooking to new exacting standards, but at the time electric appliances were considered indispensable to what contemporaries called a "modern lifestyle." The establishment of U.S.-style self-service supermarkets across western Europe changed the way food was produced, purchased, and prepared and threatened to force independent bakers, butchers, and neighborhood grocers out of business.

Intellectuals and cultural critics greeted the age of affluence with a chorus of criticism. Some worried that rampant consumerism created a bland conformity that wiped out regional and national traditions. The great majority of ordinary people, they argued, now ate the same foods, wore the same clothes, and watched the same programs on television, sapping creativity and individualism. Others complained bitterly that these changes threatened to Americanize Europe. Neither group could do much to stop the spread of consumer culture.

Worries about the Americanization of Europe were overstated. European nations preserved distinctive national cultures even during the consumer revolution, but social change nonetheless occurred. The moral authority of religious doctrine lost ground before the growing materialism of consumer society. In predominantly Protestant lands—Great Britain, Scandinavia, and parts of West Germany—church membership and regular attendance both declined significantly. Even in traditionally Catholic countries, such as Italy, Ireland, and France, outward signs of popular belief seemed to falter. At the **Second Vatican Council**, convened from 1962 to 1965,



Braniff Airways Hostesses, ca. 1968 Sporting the latest "mod" styles, hostesses for Braniff International Airways wear uniforms made by world-renowned Italian fashion designer Emilio Pucci. The 1960s counterculture helped popularize the use of kaleidoscopic fluorescent colors and wild shapes in fashion, the fine arts, and advertising. (Bettmann/Getty Images)

Catholic leaders agreed on a number of reforms meant to democratize and renew the church and broaden its appeal. They called for new openness in Catholic theology and declared that masses would henceforth be held in local languages rather than in Latin, which few could understand. These resolutions, however, did little to halt the slide toward secularization.

Family ties also weakened in the age of affluence. The number of adults living alone reached new highs, men and women married later, the nuclear family became smaller and more mobile, and divorce rates rose rapidly. By the 1970s the baby boom of the postwar decades was over, and population growth leveled out across Europe and even began to decline in prosperous northwestern Europe.

The Counterculture Movement

The dramatic emergence of a youthful counterculture accompanied growing economic prosperity. The "sixties generation" angrily criticized the comforts of the affluent society and challenged the social and political status quo.

Simple demographics played an important role in the emergence of the counterculture. Young

■ **Second Vatican Council** A meeting of Catholic leaders convened from 1962 to 1965 that initiated a number of reforms, including the replacement of Latin with local languages in church services, designed to democratize the church and renew its appeal.

soldiers returning home after World War II in 1945 eagerly established families, and the next two decades brought a dramatic increase in the number of births per year in Europe and North America. The children born during the postwar baby boom grew up in an era of political liberalism and unprecedented material abundance, yet many came to challenge the growing conformity that seemed to be a part of consumer society and the unequal distribution of wealth that arose from market economics.

Counterculture movements in both Europe and the United States drew inspiration from the American civil rights movement. In the late 1950s and early 1960s African Americans effectively challenged institutionalized inequality, using the courts, public demonstrations, sit-ins, and boycotts to throw off a deeply entrenched system of segregation and repression. If dedicated African Americans and their white supporters could successfully reform entrenched power structures, student leaders reasoned, so could they. In 1964 and 1965, at the University of California–Berkeley, students consciously adapted the tactics of the civil rights movement, including demonstrations and sit-ins, to challenge limits on free speech and academic freedom at the university. Soon students across the United States and western Europe, where rigid rules controlled student activities at overcrowded universities, were engaged in active protests. The youth movement had come of age, and it mounted a determined challenge to the Western consensus.

Eager for economic justice and more tolerant societies, student activists in western Europe and the United States embraced new forms of Marxism, creating a multidimensional movement that came to be known as the **New Left**. In general, adherents of the various strands of the New Left believed that Marxism in the Soviet Union had been perverted to serve the needs of a repressive totalitarian state but that Western capitalism, with its cold disregard for social equality, was little better. What was needed was a more humanitarian style of socialism that could avoid the worst excesses of both capitalism and Soviet-style communism. New Left critics further attacked what they saw as the conformity of consumer society.

New Left ideas inspired student intellectuals, but much counterculture activity revolved around a lifestyle rebellion that had broad appeal. Politics and daily life merged, a process captured in the popular 1960s slogan “the personal is political.” Nowhere was this more obvious than in the so-called sexual revolution. The 1960s brought frank discussion about sexuality, a new willingness to engage in premarital sex, and a growing acceptance of homosexuality. Sexual experimentation was facilitated by the development of the birth control pill, which helped eliminate the risk of unwanted pregnancy for millions of women after it

went on the market in most Western countries in the 1960s. Much of the new openness about sex crossed generational lines, but for the young the idea of sexual emancipation was closely linked to radical politics. Sexual openness and “free love,” the sixties generation claimed, moved people beyond traditional norms and might also shape a more humane society.

The revolutionary aspects of the sexual revolution are easily exaggerated. According to a poll of West German college students taken in 1968, for example, the overwhelming majority wished to establish permanent families on traditional middle-class models. Yet the sexual behavior of young people did change in the 1960s and 1970s. More young people engaged in premarital sex, and they did so at an earlier age than ever before. A 1973 study reported that only 4.5 percent of West German youths born in 1945 and 1946 had experienced sexual relations before their seventeenth birthday, but that 32 percent of those born in 1953 and 1954 had done so.² Such trends were found in other Western countries and continued in the following decades.

Along with sexual freedom, drug use and rock music encouraged lifestyle rebellion. Taking drugs challenged conventional morals; in the infamous words of the U.S. cult figure Timothy Leary, users could “turn on, tune in, and drop out.” The popular music of the 1960s championed these alternative lifestyles. Rock bands like the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, and many others sang songs about drugs and casual sex. Counterculture “scenes” developed in cities such as San Francisco, Paris, and West Berlin. Carnaby Street, the center of “swinging London” in the 1960s, was world famous for its clothing boutiques and record stores, underscoring the connections between generational revolt and consumer culture.

The United States and Vietnam

The growth of the counterculture movement was closely linked to the escalation of the Vietnam War. Although many student radicals at the time argued that imperialism was the main cause, American involvement in Vietnam was more clearly a product of the Cold War policy of containment. After Vietnam won independence from France in 1954, U.S. president Dwight D. Eisenhower (U.S. pres. 1953–1961) refused to sign the Geneva Accords that temporarily divided the country into a Communist north and an anticomunist south. When the South Vietnamese government declined to hold free elections that would unify the two zones, Eisenhower provided the south with military aid to combat guerrilla insurgents in South Vietnam who were supported by the Communist north.

President John F. Kennedy (U.S. pres. 1961–1963) increased the number of American “military advisers” to 16,000, and in 1964 President Lyndon B. Johnson

(U.S. pres. 1963–1969) greatly expanded America's role in the conflict, providing South Vietnam with massive military aid and eventually some 500,000 American troops. Though the United States bombed North Vietnam with ever-greater intensity, it did not invade the north or set up a naval blockade.

In the end, American intervention backfired. The undeclared war in Vietnam, fought nightly on American television, eventually divided the nation. Initial support was strong. The politicians, the media, and the population as a whole saw the war as part of a legitimate defense against the spread of Communist totalitarianism. But an antiwar movement that believed that the United States was fighting an immoral and imperialistic war against a small country and a heroic people quickly emerged on college campuses. In October 1965 student protesters joined forces with old-line socialists, New Left intellectuals, and pacifists in antiwar demonstrations in fifty American cities. The protests spread to western Europe. By 1967 a growing number of U.S. and European critics denounced the American presence in Vietnam as a criminal intrusion into another people's civil war.

Criticism reached a crescendo after the Vietcong staged the Tet Offensive in January 1968, the Communists' first comprehensive attack on major South Vietnamese cities. The Vietcong, an army of Communist insurgents and guerrilla fighters located in South Vietnam, suffered heavy losses, but the Tet Offensive signaled that the war was not close to ending, as Washington had claimed. The American people grew increasingly weary of the war and pressured their leaders to stop the fighting. Within months of Tet, President Johnson announced that he would not stand for re-election and called for negotiations with North Vietnam.

President Richard M. Nixon (U.S. pres. 1969–1974) sought to gradually disengage America from Vietnam once he took office. Nixon intensified the bombing campaign against the north, opened peace talks, and pursued a policy of "Vietnamization" designed to give the South Vietnamese responsibility for the war and reduce the U.S. presence. He suspended the draft and cut American forces in Vietnam from 550,000 to 24,000 in four years. In 1973 Nixon finally reached a peace agreement with North Vietnam and the Vietcong that allowed the remaining American forces to complete their withdrawal and gave the United States the right to resume bombing if the accords were broken. Fighting declined markedly in South Vietnam, where the South Vietnamese army appeared to hold its own against the Vietcong.

Although the storm of criticism in the United States passed with the peace settlement, America's disillusionment with the war had far-reaching repercussions. In late 1974, when North Vietnam launched a

successful invasion against South Vietnamese armies, the U.S. Congress refused to permit any American military response. In April 1975 the last U.S. troops were evacuated from Saigon, the South Vietnamese capital, and in July 1976 North and South Vietnam were unified under a Communist regime, ending a conflict that had begun with the anticolonial struggle against the French at the end of World War II.

Student Revolts and 1968

While the Vietnam War raged, American escalation engendered worldwide opposition, and the counterculture became increasingly radical. In western European and North American cities, students and sympathetic followers organized massive antiwar demonstrations and then extended their protests to support colonial independence movements, to demand an end to the nuclear arms race, and to call for world peace and liberation from social conventions of all kinds.

Political activism erupted in 1968 in a series of protests and riots that circled the globe. African Americans rioted across the United States after the assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., and antiwar demonstrators battled police at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago. Young protesters marched for political reform in Mexico City, where police responded by shooting and killing several hundred. Students in Tokyo rioted against the war and for university reforms. Protesters clashed with police in the West and East Blocs as well. Berlin and London witnessed massive, sometimes-violent demonstrations, students in Warsaw protested government censorship, and youths in Prague were in the forefront of the attempt to radically reform communism from within.

One of the most famous and perhaps most far-reaching of these revolts occurred in France in May 1968, when massive student protests coincided with a general strike that brought the French economy to a standstill. The "May Events" began when a group of students dismayed by conservative university policies and inspired by New Left ideals occupied buildings at the University of Paris. Violent clashes with police followed. When police tried to clear the area around the university on the night of May 10, a pitched street battle took place. At the end of the night, 460 arrests had been made by police, 367 people were wounded, and about 200 cars had been burned by protesters.

The "May Events" might have been a typically short-lived student protest against overcrowded universities, U.S. involvement in Vietnam, and the abuses of capitalism, but the demonstrations triggered a

New Left A 1960s counterculture movement that embraced updated forms of Marxism to challenge both Western capitalism and Soviet-style communism.

The “May Events” in Paris, 1968



(Gerard-Aime/Getty Images)

Rebellious students occupy the main courtyard of the Sorbonne, one of the oldest and most elite universities in France. The banner hung by the students reads “For a Revolutionary Movement.” The graffiti behind the columns is impossible to decipher, but famous examples of the slogans sprayed on the city’s walls during the revolt and general strike that followed included “Underneath the Paving Stones, the Beach” and “Be Realistic, Demand the Impossible.”

national revolt. By May 18 some 10 million workers were out on strike, and protesters occupied factories across France. For a brief moment, it seemed as if counterculture hopes for a revolution from below would come to pass. The French Fifth Republic was on the verge of collapse, and a shaken President de Gaulle surrounded Paris with troops. (See “Evaluating Visual Evidence: The ‘May Events’ in Paris, 1968,” above.)

In the end, however, the New Left goals of the radical students contradicted the bread-and-butter demands of the striking workers. When the government promised

EVALUATE THE EVIDENCE

1. Why would angry students occupy the Sorbonne University? What is the symbolism of taking over this public space?
2. Who is pictured on the posters that the students hung on the building’s columns? How do these figures represent the political beliefs that inspired the 1960s counterculture?

workplace reforms, including immediate pay raises, the strikers returned to work. President de Gaulle dissolved the French parliament and called for new elections. His conservative party won almost 75 percent of the seats, showing that the majority of the French people supported neither general strikes nor student-led revolutions. The universities shut down for the summer, administrators enacted educational reforms, and the protests had dissipated by the time the fall semester began. The May Events marked the high point of counterculture activism in Europe; in the early 1970s the movement declined.

As the political enthusiasm of the counterculture waned, committed activists disagreed about the best way to continue to fight for social change. Some followed what West German student leader Rudi Dutschke called "the long march through the institutions" and began to work for change from within the system. They ran for office and joined the emerging feminist, antinuclear, and environmental groups that would gain increasing prominence in the following decades.

Others followed a more radical path. Across Europe, but particularly in Italy and West Germany, fringe New Left groups tried to bring radical change by turning to violence and terrorism. Like the American Weather Underground, the Italian Red Brigades and the West German Red Army Faction robbed banks, bombed public buildings, and kidnapped and killed business leaders and conservative politicians. After spasms of violence in the late 1970s—in Italy, for example, the Red Brigades murdered former prime minister Aldo Moro in 1978—security forces succeeded in incarcerating most of the terrorist leaders, and the movement fizzled out.

Counterculture protests generated a great deal of excitement and trained a generation of activists. In the end, however, the protests of the sixties generation resulted in short-term and mostly limited political change. Lifestyle rebellions involving sex, drugs, and rock music certainly expanded the boundaries of acceptable personal behavior, but they hardly overthrew the existing system.

The 1960s in the East Bloc

The building of the Berlin Wall in 1961 suggested that communism was there to stay, and NATO's refusal to intervene showed that the United States and western Europe basically accepted this premise. In the West, the wall became a symbol of the repressive nature of communism in the East Bloc, where halting experiments with economic and cultural liberalization brought only limited reform.

East Bloc economies clearly lagged behind those of the West, exposing the weaknesses of central planning. To address these problems, in the 1960s Communist governments implemented cautious forms of decentralization and limited market policies. The results were mixed. Hungary's so-called New Economic Mechanism, which broke up state monopolies, allowed some private retail stores, and encouraged private agriculture, was perhaps most successful. East Germany's New Economic System, inaugurated in 1963, also brought moderate success, though it was reversed when the government returned to centralization in the late 1960s. In other East Bloc countries, however, economic growth flagged; in Poland the economy stagnated in the 1960s.

Recognizing that ordinary people in the East Bloc were growing tired of the shortages of basic consumer goods caused by the overwhelming emphasis on heavy industry, Communist planning commissions began to redirect resources to the consumer sector. Again, the results varied. By 1970, for example, ownership of televisions in the

Trabant

Als Kleinwagen in der Mittel-Klasse borgt der Trabant erstaunlich viele Vorteile eines Mittelklassewagens in sich. Ein komfortabler Sitzkomfort, ein ruhiger Motor, eine ausreichende Motorleistung ohne zuviel, kompakte und vorwiegend leicht zu warten.

Die besondere Geschäftigkeit, die erlaubt und überlässt die Bedienung sowie das problemlose, leichtkräftige Führen des Fahrzeugs. Der Trabant ist kein Luxusfahrzeug, sondern ein Vierwheeler mit dem Preis eines zweiten Autos. Vorstufe als zweitwertiges Gefährt für Beruf und Freizeit.

Leistungsfähige Kupplungsversteuerung (für normale Ausführung)

Der kleine Motor mit 45 PS liefert eine Ausgangsdrehmoment von 100 Nm bei 2.000/min. Die Kupplungsversteuerung sorgt dafür, dass das Fahrzeug die AdBlue-Belieferung benötigte Drosselung mit 4000/min erreicht.

Die Ausführung für die 1.1-Liter-ausgestattete Trabant-Variante kommt mit nur vier Wirkungsgrad über die aktuelle Leistungserhöhung auf 50 PS.

Technische Daten

Kategorie	Wert	Bemerkung
Motor	45 PS (33 kW)	bei 2.000/min
Ausgangsdrehmoment	100 Nm	bei 2.000/min
Getriebe	5-Gang-Schaltgetriebe	mit Kupplungsversteuerung
Spurweite	1.360 mm	
Länge	3.600 mm	
Breite	1.500 mm	
Radstand	2.300 mm	
Gesamthöhe	1.450 mm	
Mindestabstand zum Boden	150 mm	
Mindestabstand unter dem Motor	100 mm	
Mindestabstand unter den Achsen	100 mm	
Mindestabstand unter den Kotflügeln	100 mm	
Mindestabstand unter den Türen	100 mm	
Mindestabstand unter den Scheiben	100 mm	
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Mindestabstand unter den Stoßstangen	100 mm	
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more developed nations of East Germany, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary approached that of the affluent nations of western Europe, and other consumer goods were also more available. In the more conservative Albania and Romania, where leaders held fast to Stalinist practices, provision of consumer goods faltered.

In the 1960s Communist regimes cautiously granted cultural freedoms. In the Soviet Union, the cultural thaw allowed dissidents like Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn to publish critical works of fiction (see “Reform and De-Stalinization” in Chapter 28), and this relative tolerance spread to other East Bloc countries as well. In East Germany, for example, during the Bitterfeld Movement—named after a conference of writers, officials, and workers held at Bitterfeld, an industrial city south of Berlin—the regime encouraged intellectuals to take a more critical view of life in the East Bloc, as long as they did not directly oppose communism.

Cultural openness only went so far, however. The most outspoken dissidents were harassed and often forced to emigrate to the West; others went underground, creating books, periodicals, newspapers, and pamphlets that were printed secretly and passed hand to hand by dissident readers. This *samizdat* (“self-published”) literature emerged in Russia, Poland, and

other countries in the mid-1950s and blossomed in the 1960s. These unofficial networks of communication kept critical thought alive and built contacts among dissidents, creating the foundation for the reform movements of the 1970s and 1980s.

The citizens of East Bloc countries sought political liberty as well, and the limits on reform were sharply revealed in Czechoslovakia during the 1968 “Prague Spring” (named for the country’s capital city). In January 1968 reform elements in the Czechoslovak Communist Party gained a majority and voted out the long-time Stalinist leader in favor of Alexander Dubček (1921–1992), whose new government launched dramatic reforms. Educated in Moscow, Dubček (DOOB-chehk) was a dedicated Communist, but he and his allies believed that they could reconcile genuine socialism with personal freedom and party democracy. They called for relaxed state censorship and replaced rigid bureaucratic planning with local decision making by trade unions, workers’ councils, and consumers. The reform program—labeled “Socialism with a Human Face”—proved enormously popular.

Remembering that the Hungarian revolution had revealed the difficulty of reforming communism from within, Dubček constantly proclaimed his loyalty to the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact. But his reforms nevertheless threatened hard-line Communists, particularly in Poland and East Germany, where leaders knew full well that they lacked popular support. Moreover, Soviet authorities feared that a liberalized Czechoslovakia would eventually be drawn to neutrality or even to NATO. Thus the East Bloc leadership launched a concerted campaign of intimidation against the reformers. Finally, in August 1968, five hundred thousand Soviet and East Bloc troops occupied Czechoslovakia. The Czechoslovaks made no attempt to resist militarily, and the arrested leaders surrendered to Soviet demands. The Czechoslovak experiment in humanizing communism from within came to an end.

Shortly after the invasion of Czechoslovakia, Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev (1906–1982) announced that the U.S.S.R. would now follow the so-called **Brezhnev Doctrine**, under which the Soviet Union and its allies had the right to intervene militarily in any East Bloc country whenever they thought doing so was necessary to preserve Communist rule. The 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia was the crucial event of the Brezhnev era: it demonstrated the determination of the Communist elite to maintain the status quo throughout the Soviet bloc, which would last for another twenty years. At the same time, the Soviet crackdown encouraged dissidents to change their focus from “reforming” Communist regimes from within to building a civil society that might bring internal freedoms independent of Communist repression.



The Invasion of Czechoslovakia Armed with Czechoslovakian flags and Molotov cocktails, courageous Czechs in downtown Prague in August 1968 try to stop a Soviet tank and repel the invasion and occupation of their country by the Soviet Union and its Warsaw Pact allies. Realizing that military resistance would be suicidal, the Czechs capitulated to Soviet control. (Libor Hajsky/AP Images)

What were the consequences of economic stagnation in the 1970s?

The great postwar economic boom came to a close in the early 1970s, opening a long period of economic stagnation, widespread unemployment, and social dislocation. By the end of the 1980s the postwar consensus based on prosperity, full employment, modest regulation, and generous welfare provisions had been deeply shaken. Led by a new generation of conservative politicians, the West restructured its economy and entered the information age.

Economic Crisis and Hardship

Starting in the early 1970s the West entered into a long period of economic decline. One of the early causes of the downturn was the collapse of the international monetary system, which since 1945 had been based on the American dollar, valued in gold at \$35 an ounce. In the postwar decades the United States spent billions of dollars on foreign aid and foreign wars, weakening the value of American currency. In 1971 President Nixon attempted to reverse this trend by abruptly stopping the exchange of U.S. currency for gold. The value of the dollar fell sharply, and inflation accelerated worldwide. Countries abandoned fixed rates of currency exchange, and great uncertainty replaced postwar predictability in international trade and finance.

Even more damaging to the global economy was the dramatic increase in the price of energy and a decrease in its availability. The great postwar boom had been fueled in large part by cheap and plentiful oil from the Middle East, and the main energy supplies of the developed world were thus increasingly linked to this turbulent region. In 1967, in the Six-Day War, Israel quickly defeated Egypt, Jordan, and Syria and occupied more of the former territories of Palestine, angering Arab leaders and exacerbating anti-Western feeling in the Arab states. Tension between Arab states and the West was also fueled by economics. Over the years OPEC, the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, had watched the price of crude oil decline compared with the rising price of Western manufactured goods. OPEC decided to reverse that trend by presenting a united front against Western oil companies.

The stage was thus already set for a revolution in energy prices when Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack on Israel in October 1973, setting off the fourth Arab-Israeli war. With the help of U.S. weapons, Israel again achieved a quick victory. In response, the Arab members of OPEC declared an embargo on oil shipments to the United States and other industrialized nations that supported Israel in the war, and

they simultaneously raised oil prices. Within a year, crude oil prices quadrupled. Western nations realized that the rapid price increase was economically destructive, but together they did nothing. Thus governments, industry, and individuals dealt piecemeal with the so-called oil shock—a “shock” that turned out to be an earthquake.

Coming on the heels of the upheaval in the international monetary system, the revolution in energy prices plunged the world into its worst economic decline since the 1930s. Energy-intensive industries that had driven the economy up in the 1950s and 1960s now dragged it down. Unemployment rose, productivity and living standards declined, and inflation soared. Economists coined a new term—**stagflation**—to describe the combination of low growth and high inflation that drove the worldwide recession. By 1976 a modest recovery was in progress, but in 1979 a fundamentalist Islamic revolution overthrew the shah of Iran. When oil production in that country collapsed, the price of crude oil doubled again, and the world economy succumbed to its second oil shock. Unemployment and inflation rose dramatically before another uneven recovery began in 1982.

Anxious observers, recalling the disastrous consequences of the Great Depression, worried that the European Common Market would disintegrate in the face of severe economic dislocation and that economic nationalism would halt steps toward European unity. Yet the Common Market continued to attract new members. In 1973 Britain finally joined, as did Denmark and Ireland. After replacing authoritarian regimes with democratic governments in the 1970s, Greece joined in 1981, and Portugal and Spain entered in 1986. The nations of the Common Market cooperated more closely in international undertakings, and the movement toward western European unity stayed alive.

The developing world was hit hard by slow growth, and the global economic downturn widened the gap between rich and poor countries. Governments across South America, sub-Saharan Africa, and South Asia borrowed heavily from the United States and western Europe in attempts to restructure their economies, setting the stage for a serious international debt crisis. At the same time, the East Asian countries of Japan

■ **Brezhnev Doctrine** Doctrine created by Leonid Brezhnev that held that the Soviet Union had the right to intervene in any East Bloc country when necessary to preserve Communist rule.

■ **OPEC** The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries.

■ **stagflation** Term coined in the early 1980s to describe the combination of low growth and high inflation that led to a worldwide recession.

and then Singapore, South Korea, and Taiwan started exporting high-tech consumer goods to the West. Competition from these East Asian “tiger economies,” whose labor costs were comparatively low, shifted manufacturing jobs away from the highly industrialized countries of northern Europe and North America. Even though the world economy slowly began to recover in the 1980s, western Europe could no longer create enough jobs to replace those that were lost.

By the end of the 1970s, the foundations of economic growth in the industrialized West had begun shifting to high-tech information industries, such as computing and biotechnology, and to services, including medicine, banking, and finance. Scholars spoke of the shift as the arrival of “the information age” or **postindustrial society**. Technological advances streamlined the production of many goods, making many industrial jobs superfluous. In western Europe, heavy industry, such as steel, mining, automobile manufacture, and shipbuilding, lost ground. Factory closings led to the emergence of “rust belts”—formerly prosperous industrialized areas that were now ghost lands, with vacant lots, idle machinery, and empty inner cities. The highly industrialized Ruhr district in northwest West Germany and the once-extensive factory regions around Birmingham (Great Britain) and Detroit, Michigan, were classic examples. By 1985 the unemployment rate in western Europe had risen to its highest level since the Great Depression. Nineteen million people were jobless.

The crisis struck countless ordinary people, upending lives and causing real hardship. The punk rock songs of the late 1970s captured the mood of hostility and cynicism among young people. Yet on the whole, the welfare system fashioned in the postwar era prevented mass suffering and degradation. The responsive, socially concerned national state undoubtedly contributed to the preservation of political stability and democracy in the face of economic difficulties that might have brought revolution and dictatorship in earlier times.

With the commitment of governments to supporting social needs, government spending in most European countries continued to rise sharply during

the 1970s and early 1980s. In 1982 western European governments spent an average of more than 50 percent of all national income on social programs, as compared to only 37 percent fifteen years earlier. Across western Europe, people were willing to see their governments increase spending, but they resisted higher taxes. This imbalance contributed to the rapid growth of budget deficits, national debts, and inflation. While increased spending was generally popular, a powerful reaction against government’s ever-increasing role had set in by the late 1970s that would transform governance in the 1980s.

The New Conservatism

The transition to a postindustrial society was led to a great extent by a new generation of conservative political leaders, who believed they had viable solutions for restructuring the relations between the state and the economy. During the thirty years following World War II, both Social Democrats and the more conservative Christian Democrats had usually agreed that economic growth and social stability were best achieved through full employment and high wages, some government regulation, and generous social benefit programs. In the late 1970s, however, with a weakened economy and increased global competition, this consensus began to unravel. Whether politics turned to the right, as in Great Britain, the United States, and West Germany, or to the left, as in France and Spain, leaders moved to cut government spending and regulation in attempts to improve economic performance.

The new conservatives of the 1980s followed a philosophy that came to be known as **neoliberalism** because of its roots in the free market, laissez-faire policies favored by eighteenth-century liberal economists such as Adam Smith (see “Adam Smith and Economic Liberalism” in Chapter 17). Neoliberal theorists like U.S. economist Milton Friedman argued that governments should cut support for social services, including housing, education, and health insurance; limit business subsidies; and retreat from regulation of all kinds. (Neoliberalism should be distinguished from modern American liberalism, which generally supports social programs and some state regulation of the economy.) Neoliberals also called for **privatization**—the sale of state-managed industries to private owners. Placing government-owned industries such as transportation and communication networks and heavy industry in private hands, they argued, would both reduce government spending and lead to greater workplace efficiency. A central goal was to increase private profits, which neoliberals believed were the real engine of economic growth.

The effects of neoliberal policies are best illustrated by events in Great Britain. The broad shift toward

■ **postindustrial society** A society that relies on high-tech and service-oriented jobs for economic growth rather than heavy industry and manufacturing jobs.

■ **neoliberalism** Philosophy of 1980s conservatives who argued for privatization of state-run industries and decreased government spending on social services.

■ **privatization** The sale of state-managed industries such as transportation and communication networks to private owners; a key aspect of broader neoliberal economic reforms meant to control government spending, increase private profits, and foster economic growth, which were implemented in western Europe in response to the economic crisis of the 1970s.

greater conservatism, coupled with growing voter dissatisfaction with high taxes and runaway state budgets, helped elect Margaret Thatcher (1925–2013) prime minister in 1979. A member of the Conservative Party and a convinced neoliberal, Thatcher was determined to scale back the role of government, and in the 1980s—the “Thatcher years”—she pushed through a series of controversial free-market policies that transformed Britain. Thatcher’s government cut spending on health care, education, and public housing; reduced taxes; and privatized or sold off government-run enterprises. In one of her most popular actions, Thatcher encouraged low- and moderate-income renters in state-owned housing projects to buy their apartments at rock-bottom prices. This initiative, part of Thatcher’s broader privatization campaign, created a whole new class of property owners, thereby eroding the electoral base of Britain’s socialist Labour Party. (See “Individuals in Society: Margaret Thatcher,” page 916.)

Though Thatcher never eliminated all social programs, her policies helped replace the interventionist ethos of the welfare state with a greater reliance on private enterprise and the free market. This transition involved significant human costs. In the first three years of her government, heavy industries such as steel, coal mining, and textiles shut down, and unemployment rates in Britain doubled to over 12 percent. The gap between rich and poor widened, and increasing poverty led to discontent and crime. Strikes and working-class protests sometimes led to violent riots. Street violence often had racial overtones: immigrants from former British colonies in Africa, India, and the Caribbean, dismayed with poor jobs and racial discrimination, clashed repeatedly with police. Thatcher successfully rallied support by leading a British victory over Argentina in the brief Falklands War (1982), but over time her position weakened. By 1990 Thatcher’s popularity had fallen to record lows, and she was replaced by Conservative Party leader John Major.

In the United States, two-term president Ronald Reagan (U.S. pres. 1981–1989) followed a similar path, though his success in cutting government was more limited. Reagan’s campaign slogan—“government is not the solution to our problem, government is the problem”—summed up a movement in line with Thatcher’s ideas, which was labeled the conservative movement in the United States. With widespread popular support and the agreement of most congressional Democrats as well as Republicans, Reagan pushed through major across-the-board cuts in income taxes in 1981. But Reagan and Congress failed to limit government spending, which increased as a percentage of national income in the course of his presidency. A massive military buildup was partly responsible, but spending on social programs—despite Reagan’s



The Social Consequences of Thatcherism During the National Miners Strike of 1984, this group of about forty miners’ wives took part in a sponsored demonstration to raise cash to help the strikers’ families. Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher broke the strike, weakening the power of Britain’s trade unions and easing the turn to free-market economic reforms. Thatcher’s neoliberal policies revived economic growth but cut state subsidies for welfare benefits and heavy industries, leading to lower living standards for many working-class Britons and, as this image attests, to popular protest. (Mirrorpix/Getty Images)

pledges to rein it in—also grew rapidly. The harsh recession of the early 1980s required the government to spend more on unemployment benefits, welfare benefits, and medical treatment for the poor. Moreover, Reagan’s antiwelfare rhetoric mobilized the liberal opposition and eventually turned many moderates against him. The budget deficit soared, and U.S. government debt tripled in a decade.

West Germany also turned to the right. After more than a decade in power, the Social Democrats founded, and in 1982 Christian Democrat Helmut Kohl (1930–2017) became the new chancellor. Like Thatcher, Kohl cut taxes and government spending. His policies led to increasing unemployment in heavy industry but also to solid economic growth. By the mid-1980s West Germany was one of the most prosperous countries in the world. In foreign policy, Kohl drew close to President Reagan. The chancellor agreed to deploy U.S. cruise missiles and nuclear-armed Pershing missiles on West German territory, a decision that contributed to renewed superpower tensions. In power for sixteen years, Kohl and the Christian Democrats governed during the opening of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the reunification of East and West Germany in 1990, and the end of the Cold War.

INDIVIDUALS IN SOCIETY

Margaret Thatcher

Margaret Thatcher, the first woman elected to lead a major European state, was known as the "Iron Lady" for her uncompromising conservatism. She attacked socialism, promoted capitalism, and changed the face of modern Britain.

Raised in a lower-middle-class family in a small city in southeastern England, Thatcher entered Oxford in 1943 to study chemistry. She soon discovered a passion for politics and was elected president of student conservatives. Four years after her graduation, she ran for Parliament in 1950 in a solidly Labour district to gain experience. Articulate and attractive, she won the attention of Denis Thatcher, a wealthy businessman who drove her to campaign appearances in his Jaguar. Married a year later, the new Mrs. Thatcher abandoned chemistry, went to law school, gave birth to twins, and became a tax attorney. In 1959 she returned to politics and won a seat in that year's Conservative triumph.

For the next fifteen years Thatcher served in Parliament and held various ministerial posts when the Conservatives governed. In 1974, as the economy soured and the Conservatives lost two close elections, a rebellious Thatcher adroitly ran for the leadership of her party and won. Five years later, as the Labour government faced rampant inflation and crippling strikes, Thatcher promised to reduce union power, lower taxes, and promote free markets. Attracting swing votes from skilled workers, the Conservatives gained a majority, and she became prime minister.

A self-described "conviction politician," Thatcher rejected postwar Keynesian efforts to manage the economy, arguing that governments created inflation by printing too much money. Thus her government reduced the supply of money and credit and refused to retreat when interest rates and unemployment soared. Her popularity plummeted. But Thatcher remained in office, in part through an aggressive foreign policy. In 1982 the generals ruling Argentina suddenly seized the nearby Falkland Islands, home to 1,800 British citizens. A staunch nationalist, Thatcher detached a naval armada that recaptured the islands without a hitch. Britain admired Thatcher's determination and patriotism, and she was re-elected in 1983.



Margaret Thatcher as prime minister.

(Dave Caulkin/AP Images)

Thatcher's second term was the high point of her influence. Her commitment to privatization transformed British industry. More than fifty state-owned companies, ranging from the state telephone monopoly to the nationalized steel trust, were sold to private investors. Small investors were offered shares at bargain prices to promote "people's capitalism." Thatcher also curbed the power of British labor unions, most spectacularly in 1984, when the once-mighty coal miners rejected more mine closings and doggedly struck for a year; the "Iron Lady" stood firm and beat them. This outcome had a profound psychological impact on the public, who blamed her for growing unemployment.

Thatcher was also accused of mishandling a series of protest hunger strikes undertaken by the Irish Republican Army—in 1981 ten IRA members starved themselves to death in British prisons—but she refused to compromise with those she labeled criminals. As a result, the revolt in Northern Ireland entered one of its bloodiest phases.

Despite these problems, an increasingly stubborn and overconfident Thatcher was elected to a third term in 1987. Working with her ideological soul mate, U.S. president Ronald Reagan, she opposed greater political and economic unity within the European Community. This, coupled with rising inflation, stubborn unemployment, and an unpopular effort to assert financial control over city governments, proved her undoing. In 1990, as in 1974, party stalwarts suddenly revolted and elected a new Conservative leader. The transformational changes of the Thatcher years nonetheless endured, consolidated by her Conservative successor, John Major, and largely accepted by the new Labour prime minister, the moderate Tony Blair, who served in office from 1997 to 2007.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

1. How did the policies promoted by Thatcher's government embody neoliberal ideas?
2. Would you say that Thatcher was a successful British leader? Why or why not?

The most striking temporary exception to the general drift to the right in European politics was François Mitterrand (1916–1996) of France. After his election as president in 1981, Mitterrand and his Socialist Party led France on a lurch to the left. This marked a significant change in French politics, which had been dominated by center-right parties for some twenty-five years. Working at first in a coalition that included the French Communist Party, Mitterrand launched a vast program of nationalization and public investment designed to spend the country out of economic stagnation. By 1983 this attempt had clearly failed, and Mitterrand's Socialist government made a dramatic about-face. The Socialists were compelled to reprivatize industries they had just nationalized. They imposed a wide variety of austerity measures and maintained those policies for the rest of the decade.

Despite persistent economic crises and high social costs, by 1990 the developed nations of western Europe and North America were far more productive than they had been in the early 1970s. Western Europe was at the center of the emerging global economy, and its citizens were far richer than those in Soviet bloc countries. Even so, the collapse of the postwar consensus and the remaking of Europe in the transitional decades of the 1970s and 1980s helped generate new forms of protest and dissent across the political spectrum.

Challenges and Victories for Women

The 1970s marked the arrival of a diverse and widespread feminist movement devoted to securing genuine gender equality and promoting the general interests of women. Three basic reasons accounted for this dramatic development. First, ongoing changes in underlying patterns of motherhood and paid work created novel conditions and new demands. Second, a vanguard of feminist intellectuals articulated a powerful critique of gender relations that stimulated many women to rethink their assumptions and challenge the status quo. Third, taking a lesson from the civil rights movement in the United States and protests against the Vietnam War, dissatisfied women recognized that they had to organize if they were to influence politics and secure fundamental reforms.

Feminists could draw on a long heritage of protest, stretching back to the French Revolution and the women's movements of the late nineteenth century. They were also inspired by recent writings, such as the foundational book *The Second Sex* (1949) by the French writer and philosopher Simone de Beauvoir (1908–1986). Beauvoir, who worked closely with the existentialist philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre, analyzed the position of women within the framework of existential thought. Drawing on history, philosophy, psychology, biology, and literature, Beauvoir argued that women had almost always been trapped by particularly inflexible and



Feminist Protest in Amsterdam, ca. 1970 Members of the Dutch branch of the Women's Liberation Movement burn brassieres in front of a statue of Dutch feminist Wilhelmina Drucker. In the 1970s and 1980s, women's groups across western Europe and North America repeatedly organized public protests for women's rights, including an end to sexism, equal pay, and access to abortion. (Central Press/Getty Images)

limiting conditions. Only through courageous action and self-assertive creativity could a woman become a completely free person and escape the role of the inferior "other" that men had constructed for her gender.

The Second Sex inspired a generation of women intellectuals, and by the late 1960s and the 1970s **second-wave feminism** had spread through North America and Europe. In the United States, writer and organizer Betty Friedan's (1921–2006) pathbreaking study *The Feminine Mystique* (1963) pointed the way. Friedan called attention to the stifling aspects of women's domestic life, devoted to the service of husbands and children. Housewives lived in a "gilded cage," she concluded, because they were usually not allowed to hold professional jobs or become mature adults and genuine human beings. In 1966 Friedan helped found the National Organization for Women (NOW) to press for women's rights. NOW flourished, growing from seven hundred members in 1967 to forty thousand in 1974.

■ **second-wave feminism** Label given to the revitalized feminist movement that emerged in the United States and western Europe in the late 1960s and 1970s.

Many other women's organizations rose in Europe and North America. The diverse groups drew inspiration from Marx, Freud, or political liberalism, but in general feminists attacked patriarchy (the domination of society by men) and sexism (the inequalities faced by women simply because they were female). Throughout the 1970s publications, conferences, and institutions devoted to women's issues reinforced the emerging international movement. Advocates of women's rights pushed for new statutes governing the workplace: laws against discrimination, acts requiring equal pay for equal work, and measures such as maternal leave and affordable day care designed to help women combine careers and family responsibilities.

The movement also addressed women's rights beyond the workplace, including the right to divorce (in some Catholic countries), legalized abortion, the needs of single mothers, and protection from rape and physical violence. In almost every country, the effort to decriminalize abortion served as a catalyst in mobilizing an effective, self-conscious women's movement—and an opposition to it.

In countries that had long placed women in a subordinate position, the legal changes were little less

than revolutionary. In Italy, for example, new laws abolished restrictions on divorce and abortion that had been strengthened by Mussolini and defended energetically by the Catholic Church in the postwar era. Yet while the women's movement of the 1970s won new rights for women, subsequently it became more diffuse, a victim of both its successes and the resurgence of an antifeminist opposition.

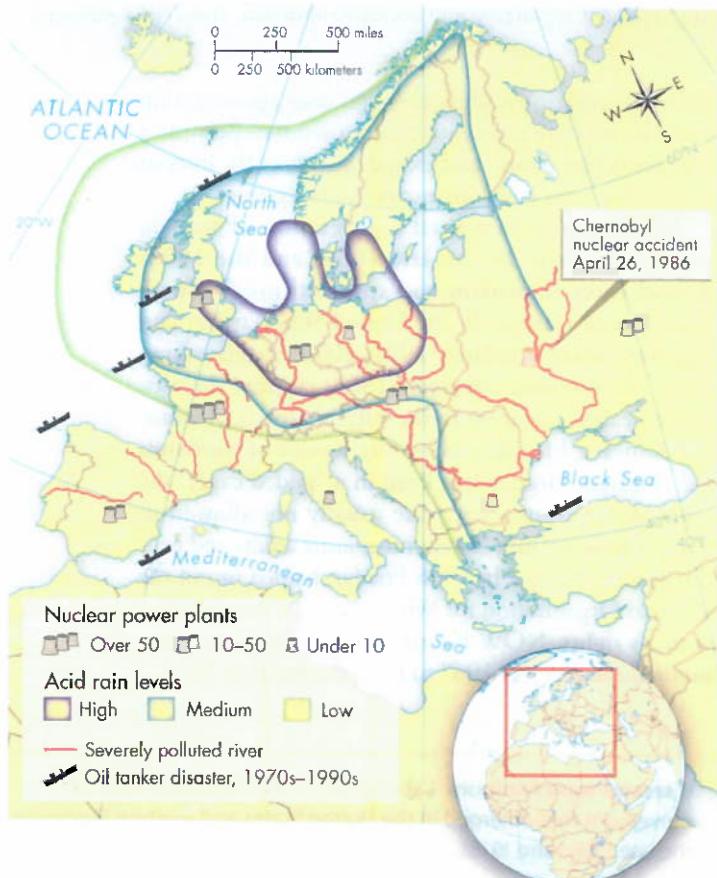
The Rise of the Environmental Movement

Like feminism, environmentalism had roots in the 1960s counterculture. Early environmentalists drew inspiration from writers like U.S. biologist Rachel Carson, whose book *Silent Spring*, published in 1962, was quickly translated into twelve European languages. Carson's chilling title referred to a future in which people in developed society would wake up one spring morning and hear no birds singing because they had all been killed by the rampant use of pesticides. The book had a striking impact on the growth of environmental movements in Europe and North America.

By the 1970s the destructive environmental costs of industrial development in western Europe and the East Bloc were everywhere apparent. The mighty Rhine River, which flows from Switzerland, past France, and through Germany and the Netherlands, was an industrial sewer. The forests of southwestern Germany were dying from acid rain, a result of smokestack emissions. The pristine coast of Brittany, in northwest France, was fouled by oil spills from massive tanker ships. Rapid industrialization in the East Bloc, undertaken with little regard for environmental impact, severely polluted waterways, contaminated farmlands and forests, and degraded air quality. Nuclear power plants across Europe were generating toxic waste that would last for centuries; serious accidents at nuclear plants—at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania (1979) and at Chernobyl in Soviet Ukraine (1986)—revealed nuclear power's potential to create human and environmental disaster (Map 29.1). These were just some examples of the environmental threats that inspired a growing environmental movement to challenge government and industry to clean up their acts.

Environmentalists had two main agendas. First, they worked to lessen the ill effects of unbridled industrial development on the natural environment. Second, they argued that local environmental problems often increased human poverty, inequality, and violence around the globe, and they sought ways to ameliorate the impact of environmental decline on human well-being. Environmental groups pursued their goals in various ways. Some used the mass media to reach potential supporters; some worked closely with politicians and public officials to change government policies. Others took a more confrontational

MAP 29.1 Pollution in Europe, ca. 1990 Despite attempts to remedy the negative consequences of the human impact on the environment, pollution remains a significant challenge for Europeans in the twenty-first century.



stance. (See “Thinking Like a Historian: The New Environmentalism,” page 920.)

In North America and western Europe, environmentalists also built new institutions. In 1971 Canadian activists established Greenpeace, a nongovernmental organization dedicated to environmental conservation and protection. Greenpeace quickly grew into an international organization, with strong support in Europe and the United States. In West Germany the environmentalist Green Party, founded in 1979, met with astounding success when it elected members to parliament in 1983, the first time in sixty years that a new political party had been seated in Germany. Its success was a model for like-minded activists in Europe and North America, and Green Party members were later elected to parliaments in Belgium, Italy, and Sweden. In the East Bloc, government planners increasingly recognized and tried to ameliorate environmental problems in the 1980s, but official censorship meant that groups like the Greens would not emerge there until after the end of Communist rule.

Separatism and Right-Wing Extremism

The 1970s also saw the rise of determined separatist movements across Europe. In Ireland, Spain, Belgium, and Switzerland—and in Yugoslavia and Czechoslovakia in the East Bloc—regional ethnic groups struggled for special rights, political autonomy, and even national independence. This separatism was most violent in Spain and Northern Ireland, where well-established insurgent groups used terrorist attacks to win government concessions. In the ethnic Basque region of northern Spain, the ETA (short, in the Basque language, for Basque Homeland and Freedom) tried to use bombings and assassinations to force the government to grant independence. After the death in 1975 of Fascist dictator Francisco Franco, who had ruled Spain for almost forty years, a new constitution granted the Basque region special autonomy, but it was not enough. The ETA stepped up its terrorist campaigns, killing over four hundred people in the 1980s.

The Provisional Irish Republican Army (IRA), a paramilitary organization in Northern Ireland, used similar tactics. Though Ireland had won autonomy in 1922, Great Britain retained control of six primarily Protestant counties in the north of the island. In the late 1960s violence re-emerged as the IRA, hoping to unite these counties with Ireland, attacked British security forces, which it saw as an occupying army. On “Bloody Sunday” in January 1972, British soldiers



Violence in Northern Ireland A silent crowd fills the streets of Derry to join the funeral procession of the thirteen young men killed on “Bloody Sunday,” when British soldiers shot into a crowd during a peaceful protest against British military activities in Northern Ireland. Although British army representatives claimed the soldiers had fired in response to gun and nail bomb attacks, a 2010 investigation concluded that the demonstrators were unarmed. In a subsequent statement, Prime Minister David Cameron explained that “What happened on Bloody Sunday was both unjustified and unjustifiable” and apologized on behalf of the British government. (PA Images/Getty Images)

shot and killed thirteen demonstrators who had been protesting anti-Catholic discrimination in the town of Derry, and the violence escalated. For the next thirty years the IRA attacked soldiers and civilians in Northern Ireland and in Britain itself. Over three thousand British soldiers, civilians, and IRA members were killed during the “Time of Troubles” before negotiations between the IRA and the British government opened in the late 1990s; a settlement was finally reached in 1998.

In the 1970s and 1980s mainstream European politicians also faced challenges from newly assertive political forces on the far right, including the National Front in France, the Northern League in Italy, the Austrian Freedom Party, and the National Democratic Party in West Germany. Populist leaders such as Jean-Marie Le Pen, the founder of the French National Front, opposed European integration and called for an embrace of nationalism, often at the expense of the non-European immigrants who were a growing proportion of western Europe’s working-class population. New right-wing politicians promoted themselves as the champions of ordinary (white) workers, complaining that immigrants swelled welfare rolls and stole jobs from native-born Europeans. Though their programs at times veered close to open racism, in the 1980s they began to win seats in national parliaments.

THINKING LIKE A HISTORIAN

The New Environmentalism

The environmentalism of the late 1960s and 1970s readily drew on earlier nineteenth-century concerns about the effects of an emerging industrial-urban society on human health and the natural landscape. Yet as the negative impact of industrial development became ever more apparent, arguments that stewardship of the environment should be a fundamental concern of humankind grew increasingly angry—and more widespread. How did a new generation of activists respond to the environmental degradation of the late twentieth century?

1 Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, 1962.

Rachel Carson's highly readable polemic specifically targeted the U.S. pesticide industry, though the pathbreaking marine biologist and conservationist made larger claims about the great chains of being that enmeshed humans in their natural environment.

For each of us, as for the robin in Michigan or the salmon in the Miramichi, this is a problem of ecology, of interrelationships, of interdependence. We poison the caddis flies in a stream and the salmon runs dwindle and die. We poison the gnats in a lake and the poison travels from link to link of the food chain and soon the birds of the lake margins become its victims. We spray our elms and the following springs are silent of robin song, not because we sprayed the robins directly but because the poison traveled, step by step, through the now familiar elm leaf-earthworm-robin cycle. These are matters of record, observable, part of the visible world around us. They reflect the web of life—or death—that scientists know as ecology. . . .

We stand now where two roads diverge. But unlike the roads in Robert Frost's familiar poem, they are not equally fair. The road we have long been traveling is deceptively easy, a smooth superhighway on which we progress with great speed, but at its end lies disaster. The other fork of the road—the one less traveled by—offers our last, our only chance to reach a destination that assures the preservation of the earth.

The choice is, after all, ours to make.

2 Arne Naess, "The Deep Ecology Platform," 1984.

Norwegian philosopher Arne Naess was a founder of the Deep Ecology wilderness movement. His vision of "biospheric egalitarianism" rejected notions that humans stood above or outside of nature and called on activists to take a radical stand in defense of the natural world.



1. The well-being and flourishing of human and nonhuman life on Earth have value in themselves (synonyms: inherent worth, intrinsic value, inherent value). These values are independent of the usefulness of the nonhuman world for human purposes.

2. Richness and diversity of life forms contribute to the realization of these values and are also values in themselves.

3. Humans have no right to reduce this richness and diversity except to satisfy vital needs.

4. Present human interference with the nonhuman world is excessive, and the situation is rapidly worsening.

5. The flourishing of human life and cultures is compatible with a substantial decrease of the human population. The flourishing of nonhuman life requires such a decrease.

6. Policies must therefore be changed. The changes in policies affect basic economic, technological, and ideological structures. The resulting state of affairs will be deeply different from the present.

7. The ideological change is mainly that of appreciating life quality (dwelling in situations of inherent worth) rather than adhering to an increasingly higher standard of living. There will be a profound awareness of the difference between big and great.

8. Those who subscribe to the foregoing points have an obligation directly or indirectly to participate in the attempt to implement the necessary changes.

ANALYZING THE EVIDENCE

1. Compare and contrast the arguments made in Sources 1, 2, and 3. What do they share? What are the most significant differences?
2. In Sources 4 and 5, how do environmental activists use visual presentation and symbolism to assert their political beliefs? In Source 5, how do the more traditionally dressed members of the parliament react to the Green Party members in their midst?
3. Do the arguments in these sources express continuities with the ideas of the 1960s counterculture, or was the environmentalism of the 1970s and 1980s something new?

3 Rudolf Bahro, "Some Preconditions for Resolving the Ecology Crisis,"

1979. Rudolf Bahro, a founding member of the West German Green Party who compared the earth's environment to the doomed ocean liner *Titanic*, called for radical intervention in the structures of corporate capitalism to prevent the looming disaster.

The ecology crisis is insoluble unless we work at the same time at overcoming the confrontation of military blocs. It is insoluble without a resolute policy of détente and disarmament, one that renounces all demands for subverting other countries. . . .

The ecology crisis is insoluble without a world order on the North-South axis. And we must realize that our entire standard of living [in the North] is largely based on the exploitation and suppression of the rest of humanity. . . .

The ecology crisis is insoluble without a decisive breakthrough towards social justice in our own country and without a swift equalization of social differences throughout Western Europe. . . . The ecology crisis is insoluble without progress in human emancipation here and now, even while capitalism still exists. It is insoluble without countless individuals managing to rise above their immediate and compensatory interests. . . .

If all this is brought to a common denominator, the conclusion is as follows: The ecology crisis is insoluble under capitalism. We have to get rid of the capitalist manner of regulating the economy and above all of the capitalist driving mechanism, for a start at least bringing it under control. In other words, there is no solution to the ecology crisis without the combination of all anti-capitalist and socialist tendencies for a peaceful democratic revolution against the dominant economic structure.



4 "Please Save Me from Lead Pollution," 1978. A nine-year-old schoolgirl stands in front of the British prime minister's residence to protest the proposed extension of the M25 highway through her local playing fields, warning that children will be hurt by lead poisoning if the project goes through.

(Keystone/Getty Images)



(Topk Bildagentur/Peter Strack/Art Resource, NY)

5 Green Party representatives enter the West German parliament,

1983. Members of the West German "Greens" won enough votes to send several representatives to the Bundestag (parliament) for the first time in 1983, a significant victory for the environmental movements that emerged in the 1970s.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

The environmental activists of the 1970s and 1980s were a diverse group with diverse opinions about the ways to address environmental issues. Using the sources above, along with what you have learned in class and in Chapters 28 and 29, write a short essay that explores the impact of environmentalism on political debate in the late twentieth century. How did environmental activists combine ethical, economic, and scientific critiques?

Sources: (1) Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2002), pp. 189, 277; (2) Bill Devall and George Sessions, *Deep Ecology* (Salt Lake City, Utah: G. M. Smith, 1985), p. 70; (4) Rudolf Bahro, *Socialism and Survival* (London: Merlin Books, 1982), pp. 41–43.

What led to the decline of “developed socialism” in the East Bloc?

In the postwar decades the Communist states of the East Bloc had achieved a shaky social consensus based on a rising standard of living, an extensive welfare system, and political repression. In the long run, leaders promised, “developed socialism” would prove better than capitalism. But such claims were an attempt to paper over serious tensions in socialist society. When Mikhail Gorbachev burst on the scene in 1985, the new Soviet leader opened an era of reform that was as sweeping as it was unexpected.

State and Society in the East Bloc

By the 1970s many of the professed goals of communism had been achieved. Communist leaders in central and eastern Europe and the Soviet Union adopted the term **developed socialism** (sometimes called “real existing socialism”) to describe the accomplishments of their societies. Agriculture had been thoroughly collectivized, and although Poland was an exception, 80 to 90 percent of Soviet and East Bloc farmers worked on huge collective farms. Industry and business had been nationalized, and only a small portion of the economy remained in private hands in most East Bloc countries. The state had also done much to level class differences. Though some people—particularly party members—clearly had greater access to opportunities

and resources, the gap between rich and poor was far smaller than in the West. An extensive system of government-supported social benefits included free medical care, guaranteed employment, inexpensive public transportation, and large subsidies for entertainment, rent, and food.

Everyday life under developed socialism was often an uneasy mixture of outward conformity and private disengagement—or apathy. The Communist Party dominated public life. Party-led mass organizations for youth, women, workers, and sports groups staged huge rallies, colorful festivals, and new holidays that exposed citizens to the values of the socialist state. But while East Bloc citizens might participate in public events, at home, and in private, they often grumbled about and sidestepped the Communist authorities.

East Bloc living standards were well above those in the developing world, but below those in the West. Centralized economic planning continued to result in shortages, and people complained about the poor quality and lack of choice of the most basic goods. Under these conditions, informal networks of family and friends helped people find hard-to-get goods and offered support beyond party organizations. Though the secret police persecuted those who openly challenged the system and generated mountains of files on

Crossing the Border Between East and West Berlin It was relatively easy for Westerners to get into East Germany to visit friends and relatives, but the Communist state tightly controlled the border. Most East Germans were never allowed to visit the West. In this 1964 photo, a group of West Berliners cross the border to return home after a trip to East Berlin. The glass and steel building in the background—the East German border-crossing station—was nicknamed the “Palace of Tears” by local residents. Here departing West Germans and their East German relatives who could not leave East Germany said many tearful farewells. The limits on travel to the West were one of the most hated aspects of daily life in the East Bloc. (© AND-Bildarchiv/ullstein bild/The Image Works)



ordinary people, they generally left alone those who demonstrated the required conformity.

Women in particular experienced the contradictions of the socialist system. Official state policy guaranteed equal rights for women and encouraged them to join the workforce in positions formerly reserved for men, and an extensive system of state-supported child care freed women to accept these employment opportunities and eased the work of parenting. Yet women rarely made it into the upper ranks of business or politics, and they faced the same double burden as those in the West. In addition, government control of the public sphere meant that the independent groups dedicated to feminist reform that emerged in the West in the 1970s developed more slowly in the East Bloc and the Soviet Union. Women could complain to the Communist authorities about unequal or sexist conditions at work or at home, but until the 1980s they could not build private, nongovernmental organizations to lobby for change.

Though everyday life was fairly comfortable in the East Bloc, a number of deeply rooted structural problems undermined popular support for Soviet-style communism. These fundamental problems would contribute to the re-emergence of civic dissent and ultimately to the revolutions of 1989. East Bloc countries—like those in the West—were hard hit by the energy crisis and stagflation of the 1970s. For a time, access to inexpensive oil from the Soviet Union, which had huge resources, helped prop up faltering economies, but this cushion began to fall apart in the 1980s.

For a number of reasons, East Bloc leaders refused to make the economic reforms that might have made developed socialism more effective. First, a move toward Western-style postindustrial society would have required fundamental changes to the Communist system. As in the West, it would have hurt the already weakened living standard of industrial workers. But Communist East Bloc states were publicly committed to supporting the working classes, including coal miners, shipbuilders, and factory and construction workers. To pursue the neoliberal reforms undertaken in the West would have destroyed support for the government among these important constituencies, which was already tenuous at best. In addition, East Bloc regimes refused to cut spending on social benefits because that was, after all, one of the proudest achievements of socialism.

Second, East Bloc economies faltered. High-tech industries failed to take off in Communist Europe, in part because the West maintained embargoes on technology exports. The state continued to provide subsidies to heavy industries such as steel and mining, even though the industrial goods produced in the East Bloc were increasingly uncompetitive in the new global system. To stave off total collapse, governments borrowed

massive amounts of hard currency from Western banks and governments, helping to convince ordinary people that communism was bankrupt and setting up a cycle of indebtedness that helped bring down the entire system in 1989.

Economic decline was hardly the only reason people increasingly questioned one-party Communist rule. The best career and educational opportunities were reserved for party members or handed out as political favors, leaving many talented people underemployed and resentful. Tight controls on travel continually called attention to the burdens of daily life in a repressive society. The one-party state had repeatedly quashed popular reform movements, retreated from economic liberalization, and jailed or exiled dissidents, even those who wished to reform communism from within. Though many East Bloc citizens still found the promise of Marxist egalitarian socialism appealing, they increasingly doubted the legitimacy of Soviet-style communism: the dream of distributing goods “from each according to his means, to each according to his needs” (as Marx had once put it) hardly made up for the deficiencies of developed socialism.

Dissent in Czechoslovakia and Poland

Stagnation in the East Bloc encouraged small numbers of dedicated people to try to change society from below. Developments in Czechoslovakia and Poland were the most striking and significant, and determined protest movements re-emerged in both countries in the mid-1970s. Remembering a history of violent repression and Soviet invasion, dissenters carefully avoided direct challenges to government leaders. Nor did they try to reform the Communist Party from within, as Dubček and his followers had attempted in Prague in 1968. Instead, they worked to build a civil society from below—to create a realm of freedom beyond formal politics, where civil liberties and human rights could be exercised independently of the Communist system.

In Czechoslovakia in 1977 a small group of citizens, including future Czechoslovak president Václav Havel (VAH-slahf HAH-vuhl) (1936–2011), signed a manifesto that came to be known as Charter 77. The group criticized the government for ignoring the human rights provision of the Helsinki Accords and called on Communist leaders to respect civil and political liberties. They also criticized censorship and argued for improved environmental policies. Despite immediate state repression, the group challenged passive

■ developed socialism A term used by Communist leaders to describe the socialist accomplishments of their societies, such as nationalized industry, collective agriculture, and extensive social welfare programs.

acceptance of Communist authority and voiced public dissatisfaction with developed socialism.

In Poland, an unruly satellite from the beginning, the Communists had failed to dominate society to the extent seen elsewhere in the East Bloc. Most agricultural land remained in private hands, and the Catholic Church thrived. The Communists also failed to manage the economy effectively. The 1960s brought stagnation, and in 1970 Poland's working class rose again in angry protest. A new Communist leader came to power, and he wagered that massive inflows of Western capital and technology, especially from rich and now-friendly West Germany, could produce a Polish economic miracle. Instead, bureaucratic incompetence and the first oil shock in 1973 sent the economy into a nosedive. Workers, intellectuals, and the church became increasingly restive. Then the real Polish miracle occurred: Cardinal Karol Wojtyła (voy-TIH-wah), archbishop of Kraków, was elected pope in 1978 as John Paul II. In June 1979 he returned to Poland from Rome, preaching love of Christ and country and the "inalienable rights of man." The pope drew enormous crowds and electrified the Polish nation.

In August 1980 strikes broke out across Poland; at the gigantic Lenin Shipyards in Gdansk (formerly known as Danzig) sixteen thousand workers laid down their tools and occupied the plant. As other workers joined "in solidarity," the strikers advanced the

ideals of civil society, including the right to form trade unions free from state control, freedom of speech, release of political prisoners, and economic reforms. After the strikers occupied the shipyard for eighteen days, the government gave in and accepted the workers' demands in the Gdansk Agreement. In a state in which the Communist Party claimed to rule on behalf of the proletariat, a working-class revolt had won an unprecedented, even revolutionary, victory.

Led by feisty Lenin Shipyards electrician and devout Catholic Lech Wałęsa (lehk vah-WEHN-suh) (b. 1943), the workers organized a free and democratic trade union called **Solidarity**. As in Czechoslovakia, Solidarity worked cautiously to shape an active civil society. Joined by intellectuals and supported by the Catholic Church, it became a national union with a full-time staff of 40,000 and 9.5 million members. Cultural and intellectual freedom blossomed in Poland, and Solidarity enjoyed tremendous public support. But Solidarity's leaders pursued a self-limiting revolution, meant only to defend the concessions won in the Gdansk Agreement. Solidarity thus practiced moderation, refusing to challenge directly the Communist monopoly on political power. At the same time, the ever-present threat of calling a nationwide strike gave it real leverage in negotiations with the Communist bosses.

Solidarity's combination of strength and moderation postponed a showdown, as the Soviet Union played a

waiting game of threats and pressure. After a confrontation in March 1981, Wałęsa settled for minor government concessions, and Solidarity dropped plans for a massive general strike. Criticism of Wałęsa's moderate leadership gradually grew, and Solidarity lost its cohesiveness. The worsening economic crisis also encouraged radical actions among disgruntled Solidarity members, and the Polish Communist leadership shrewdly denounced the union for promoting economic collapse and provoking a possible Soviet invasion. In December 1981 Wojciech Jaruzelski (VOY-chehk yahr-oo-ZEHL-skee), the general who led Poland's Communist government, suddenly proclaimed martial law and arrested Solidarity's leaders.

Outlawed and driven underground, Solidarity survived in part because of the government's unwillingness (and probably its inability) to impose full-scale terror. Moreover, millions of Poles decided to continue acting as if they were free—the hallmark of civil society—even though they were not. Cultural and intellectual life remained extremely vigorous as the Polish economy continued to deteriorate.



Lech Wałęsa and Solidarity An inspiration for fellow workers at the Lenin Shipyards in the dramatic and successful strike against the Communist leaders in August 1980, Wałęsa played a key role in Solidarity before and after it was outlawed. Here he speaks at a protest rally in the port city of Gdansk during the strike. Wałęsa personified the enduring opposition to Communist rule in eastern Europe. (STR/Reuters/Forum/Erazm Ciolek/Newscom)

Thus popular support for outlawed Solidarity remained strong under martial law in the 1980s, preparing the way for the union's political rebirth toward the end of the decade.

The rise and survival of Solidarity showed that ordinary Poles would stubbornly struggle for greater political and religious liberty, cultural freedom, trade-union rights, patriotic nationalism, and a more humane socialism. Not least, Solidarity's challenge encouraged fresh thinking in the Soviet Union, ever the key to lasting change in the East Bloc.

From Détente Back to Cold War

Soviet and East Bloc leaders faced challenges from abroad as optimistic hopes for détente in international relations faded in the late 1970s.

Brezhnev's Soviet Union ignored the human rights provisions of the Helsinki agreement, and East-West political competition remained very much alive outside Europe. Many Americans became convinced that the Soviet Union was taking advantage of détente, steadily building up its military might and pushing for political gains and revolutions in Africa, Asia, and Latin America. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979, designed to save an increasingly unpopular Marxist regime, alarmed the West. Many Americans feared that the oil-rich states of the Persian Gulf would be next, and once again they looked to the NATO alliance and military might to thwart Communist expansion.

President Jimmy Carter (U.S. pres. 1977–1981) tried to lead NATO beyond verbal condemnation of the Soviet Union and urged economic sanctions against it, but only Great Britain among the European allies supported the American initiative. The alliance showed the same lack of concerted action when the Solidarity movement rose in Poland. Some observers concluded that NATO had lost the will to act decisively in dealing with the Soviet bloc.

The Atlantic alliance endured, however, and the U.S. military buildup launched by Carter in his last years in office was greatly accelerated by President Reagan, who was swept into office in 1980 by a wave of patriotism and economic discontent. The new American leadership acted as if the military balance had tipped in favor of the Soviet Union, which Reagan anathematized as the "evil empire." Increasing defense spending enormously, the Reagan administration deployed short-range nuclear missiles in western Europe and



The Soviet War in Afghanistan, 1979–1989

built up the navy to preserve American power in the post-Vietnam age. The broad shift toward greater conservatism in the 1980s gave Reagan invaluable allies in western Europe. Margaret Thatcher worked well with Reagan and was a forceful advocate for a revitalized Atlantic alliance, and under Helmut Kohl West Germany likewise worked with the United States to coordinate military and political policy toward the Soviet bloc.

Gorbachev's Reforms in the Soviet Union

Cold War tensions aside, the Soviet Union's Communist elite seemed safe from any challenge from below in the early 1980s. A well-established system of administrative controls stretched downward from

the central ministries and state committees to provincial cities and from there to factories, neighborhoods, and villages. At each level of this massive state bureaucracy, the overlapping hierarchy of the 17.5-million-member Communist Party maintained tight state control. Organized opposition was impossible, and average people left politics to the bosses.

Although the massive state and party bureaucracy safeguarded the elite, it promoted widespread apathy and stagnation. When the ailing Brezhnev finally died in 1982, his successor, the long-time chief of the secret police, Yuri Andropov (1914–1984), tried to invigorate the system. Relatively little came of his efforts, but they combined with a sharply worsening economic situation to set the stage for the emergence in 1985 of Mikhail Gorbachev (b. 1931), the most vigorous Soviet leader in a generation.

A lawyer and experienced Communist Party official, Gorbachev believed in communism but realized that the Soviet Union was failing to keep up with the West and was losing its superpower status. Thus he tried to revitalize the Soviet system with fundamental reforms. An idealist who wanted to improve conditions for ordinary citizens, Gorbachev understood that the enormous expense of the Cold War arms race had had a disastrous impact on living conditions in the Soviet Union; improvement at home, he realized, required better relations with the West.

In his first year in office, Gorbachev consolidated his power, attacked corruption and incompetence in the bureaucracy, and tried to reduce alcoholism,

Solidarity Independent Polish trade union that worked for workers' rights and political reform throughout the 1980s.



Mikhail Gorbachev Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev (center, with red tie) walks with a crowd of delegates to the twenty-eighth and last congress of the Soviet Communist Party in July 1990. Gorbachev took office in 1985 with the goal of reforming communism from within. His plans spiraled out of control. By 1991 the Soviet Union and the East Bloc had disintegrated into independent, noncommunist states. (Pascal Le Segretain/Getty Images)

which was widespread and lethal in Soviet society. He worked out an ambitious reform program designed to restructure the economy to provide for the real needs of the Soviet population. To accomplish this economic restructuring, or **perestroika** (pehr-uh-STROY-kuh), Gorbachev and his supporters eased government price controls on some goods, gave more independence to state enterprises, and created profit-seeking private cooperatives to provide personal services. These small-scale reforms initially produced improvements, but shortages grew as the economy stalled at an intermediate point between central planning and free-market mechanisms. By late 1988 widespread consumer dissatisfaction posed a serious threat to Gorbachev's leadership and the entire reform program.

Gorbachev's bold and far-reaching campaign for greater freedom of expression was much more successful. Very popular in a country where censorship, dull uniformity, and outright lies had long characterized public discourse, the newfound openness, or **glasnost** (GLAZ-nohst), of the government and the media marked an astonishing break with the past. Long-banned émigré writers sold millions of copies

of their works in new editions, while denunciations of Stalin and his terror became standard fare in plays and movies. In another example of glasnost in action, after several days of hesitation the usually secretive Soviet government issued daily reports on the 1986 nuclear plant accident at Chernobyl, one of the worst environmental disasters in history. Indeed, the initial openness in government pronouncements quickly went much further than Gorbachev intended and led to something approaching free speech, a veritable cultural revolution.

Democratization was another element of reform. Beginning as an attack on corruption in the Communist Party, it led to the expansion of the ballot, with candidates outside the Communist Party for the first time in the Soviet Union since 1917. Gorbachev and the party remained in control, but a minority of critical independents was elected in April 1989 to a revitalized Congress of People's Deputies. Millions of Soviets then watched the new congress for hours on television as Gorbachev and his ministers saw their proposals debated and even rejected. An active civil society was emerging—a new political culture at odds with the Communist Party's monopoly of power and control.

Democratization also ignited demands for greater political and cultural autonomy and even national independence among non-Russian minorities living in the fifteen Soviet republics. The Soviet population numbered about 145 million ethnic Russians and 140.6 million non-Russians, including 55 million Muslims in the Central Asian republics and over 44 million Ukrainians. Once Gorbachev opened the doors to greater public expression, tensions flared between central Soviet control and national separatist movements. Independence groups were particularly active in the Baltic Soviet socialist republics of Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia; in western Ukraine; and in the Transcaucasian republics of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia.

Finally, Gorbachev brought reforms to the field of foreign affairs. He withdrew Soviet troops from Afghanistan in February 1989 and sought to reduce East-West tensions. Of enormous importance, the Soviet leader sought to halt the arms race with the United States and convinced President Reagan of his sincerity. In a Washington summit in December 1987, the two leaders agreed to eliminate all land-based intermediate-range missiles in Europe, setting the stage for more arms reductions. Gorbachev pledged to respect the political choices of the peoples of East Bloc countries, repudiating the Brezhnev Doctrine and giving encouragement to reform movements in Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Hungary. By early 1989 it seemed that if Gorbachev held to his word, the tragic Soviet occupation of eastern Europe might wither away, taking the long Cold War with it once and for all. (See “Viewpoints: ‘Mr. Gorbachev, Tear Down This Wall,’” page 927.)

■ **perestroika** Economic restructuring and reform implemented by Premier Mikhail Gorbachev in the Soviet Union in 1985.

■ **glasnost** Soviet premier Mikhail Gorbachev's popular campaign for openness in government and the media.

VIEWPOINTS

"Mr. Gorbachev, Tear Down This Wall!"

A pair of famous speeches marked the beginning of the end of the Cold War: U.S. president Ronald Reagan's address at the Berlin Wall (June 12, 1987) and Soviet general secretary Mikhail Gorbachev's address to the United Nations General Assembly (December 7, 1988). In a resounding call for freedom, Reagan demanded that the East Bloc open its borders. Gorbachev shocked his audience when he spoke openly of the need for "the principle of freedom"—a move that encouraged East Bloc nations to seek independence from Soviet control.

Reagan's Speech at the Berlin Wall

Behind me stands a wall that encircles the free sectors of this city, part of a vast system of barriers that divides the entire continent of Europe. From the Baltic South, those barriers cut across Germany in a gash of barbed wire, concrete, dog runs, and guard towers. Farther south, there may be no visible, no obvious wall. But there remain armed guards and checkpoints all the same—still a restriction on the right to travel, still an instrument to impose upon ordinary men and women the will of a totalitarian state. . . .

[I]n the West today, we see a free world that has achieved a level of prosperity and well-being unprecedented in all human history. In the Communist world, we see failure, technological backwardness, declining standards of health, even want of the most basic kind—too little food. . . . After these four decades, then, there stands before the entire world one great and inescapable conclusion: Freedom leads to prosperity. Freedom replaces the ancient hatreds among nations with comity and peace. Freedom is the victor.

And now—now the Soviets themselves may, in a limited way, be coming to understand the importance of freedom. We hear much from Moscow about a new policy of reform and openness. . . . Are these the beginnings of profound changes in the Soviet state? Or are they token gestures intended to raise false hopes in the West, or to strengthen the Soviet system without changing it? . . .

There is one sign the Soviets can make that would be unmistakable, that would advance dramatically the cause of freedom and peace.

General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization: Come here to this gate.

Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate.

Mr. Gorbachev—Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!

Gorbachev's Address to the UN General Assembly

Today we have entered an era when progress will be based on the interests of all mankind. Consciousness of this requires that world policy, too, should be determined by the priority of the values of all humanity. . . .

Further world progress is now possible only through the search for a consensus of all humanity, in movement toward a new world order. . . . The formula of development "at another's expense" is becoming outdated. In light of present realities, genuine progress by infringing upon the rights and liberties of man and peoples, or at the expense of nature, is impossible. . . .

The compelling necessity of the principle of freedom of choice is also clear to us. The failure to recognize this . . . is fraught with very dire consequences, consequences for world peace. Denying that right to the peoples, no matter what the pretext, no matter what the words are used to conceal it, means infringing upon even the unstable balance that is, has been possible to achieve. . . .

Finally, being on U.S. soil . . . I cannot but turn to the subject of our relations with this great country. . . . Relations between the Soviet Union and the United States of America span 5 1/2 decades. . . . For too long they were built under the banner of confrontation, and sometimes of hostility, either open or concealed. But in the last few years, throughout the world people were able to heave a sigh of relief, thanks to the changes for the better in the substance and atmosphere of the relations between Moscow and Washington.

QUESTIONS FOR ANALYSIS

- Where do Reagan and Gorbachev draw on familiar Cold War rhetoric? Where do they move beyond it?
- American historians sometimes argue that Reagan's Berlin Wall speech was a major reason for the ultimate collapse of the Soviet system. How would you evaluate such claims? Were there other, equally important causes?

Sources: "Ronald Reagan, Remarks at the Brandenburg Gate," June 12, 1987, American Rhetoric/Top 100 Speeches, <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/ronaldreaganbrandenburggate.htm>; "Gorbachev's Speech to the U.N." December 7, 1988, https://astro.temple.edu/~rimmerma/gorbachev_speech_to_UN.htm.



What were the causes and consequences of the 1989 revolutions in the East Bloc?

In 1989 Gorbachev's plan to reform communism from within snowballed out of control. A series of largely peaceful revolutions swept across eastern Europe, overturning existing Communist regimes (Map 29.2). The peoples of the East Bloc gained political freedom,

West Germany absorbed its East German rival, and as Gorbachev's reforms boomeranged, a complicated anti-communist revolution swept through the Soviet Union. The Cold War came to an end, and the United States suddenly stood as the world's only superpower.



MAPPING THE PAST

MAP 29.2 Democratic Movements in Eastern Europe, 1989

Countries that had been satellites in the orbit of the Soviet Union began to set themselves free in 1989.

ANALYZING THE MAP Why did the means by which communism was overthrown in the East Bloc vary from country to country? What accounts for the rapid spread of these democratic movements?

CONNECTIONS How did Gorbachev's reforms in the Soviet Union contribute to the spread of democratic movements in eastern Europe, and how did his actions hasten the end of the Cold War?

The Collapse of Communism in the East Bloc

The collapse of Communist rule in the Soviet satellite states surprised many Western commentators, who had expected Cold War divisions to persist for many years. Yet while the revolutions of 1989 appeared to erupt quite suddenly, long-standing structural weaknesses in the Communist system had prepared the way. East Bloc economies never really recovered from the economic catastrophe of the 1970s. State spending on outdated industries and extensive social benefits led to massive indebtedness to Western banks and undermined economic growth, while limits on personal and political freedoms fueled a growing sense of injustice.

In this general climate of economic stagnation and popular anger, Solidarity and the Polish people led the way to revolution. In 1988 widespread strikes, raging inflation, and the outlawed Solidarity's refusal to cooperate with the military government had brought Poland to the brink of economic collapse. Poland's frustrated Communist leaders offered to negotiate with Solidarity if the outlawed union's leaders could get the strikers back to work and resolve the political crisis. The subsequent agreement in April 1989 legalized Solidarity and declared that a large minority of representatives to the Polish parliament would be chosen by free elections that June. Still guaranteed a parliamentary majority and expecting to win many of the contested seats, the Communists believed that their rule was guaranteed for four years and that Solidarity would keep the workers in line.

Lacking access to the state-run media, Solidarity succeeded nonetheless in mobilizing the country and winning all but one of the contested seats in an overwhelming victory. Moreover, many angry voters crossed off the names of unopposed party candidates, so that the Communist Party failed to win the majority its leaders had anticipated. Solidarity members jubilantly entered the Polish parliament, and a dangerous stalemate quickly developed. But Lech Wałęsa, a gifted politician who always repudiated violence, adroitly obtained a majority by securing the allegiance of two minor procommunist parties that had been part of the coalition government after World War II. In August 1989 Tadeusz Mazowiecki (ta-DAY-usz MAH-zoe-vee-ETS-key) (1927–2013), the editor of one of Solidarity's weekly newspapers, was sworn in as Poland's new noncommunist prime minister.

In its first year and a half, the new Solidarity government cautiously introduced revolutionary political changes. It eliminated the hated secret police, the Communist ministers in the government, and finally Communist Party leader Jaruzelski himself, but it did so step-by-step to avoid confrontation with the army or the Soviet Union. In economics, however,

THE COLLAPSE OF COMMUNISM

1977	Charter 77 reform movement founded in Czechoslovakia
1980	Polish Solidarity movement formed
1981	Solidarity outlawed by Communist leaders
1982	Soviet premier Leonid Brezhnev dies
1985	Mikhail Gorbachev becomes Soviet premier and institutes perestroika and glasnost reforms
1988	Polish workers strike throughout country
1989	
April	Solidarity legalized in Poland
August	Noncommunist prime minister elected in Poland
November	Berlin Wall opened
November–December	Velvet Revolution ends communism in Czechoslovakia
December	Communist dictator of Romania executed
1990	
February	Communist Party defeated in Soviet elections
March	Free elections in Hungary
May	Boris Yeltsin elected leader of Russian Soviet Republic
October	Reunification of Germany
November	Paris Accord: arms reductions across Europe
1991	
August	Communist hardliners kidnap Gorbachev and try to overthrow Soviet government
December	Soviet Union dissolved

the Solidarity government was radical from the beginning. It applied economic shock therapy, an intense dose of neoliberal policy designed to make a clean break with state planning and move quickly to market mechanisms and private property. Thus the government abolished controls on many prices on January 1, 1990, and drastically reformed the monetary system.

Hungary followed Poland. Hungary's moderate Communist Party leader János Kádár (KAH-dahr)



The Opening of the Berlin Wall The sudden and unanticipated opening of the Berlin Wall on November 10, 1989, dramatized the spectacular fall of communism throughout east-central Europe. West Berliners welcomed the East Germans who piled into their “Trabi” automobiles to cross the border. Millions of East German citizens traveled into West Berlin and the Federal Republic of Germany in the first few days after the surprise relaxation of inter-German travel controls. (© DPA/Courtesy Everett Collection)

from Austria. Tens of thousands of dissatisfied East German “vacationers” then poured into Hungary, crossed into Austria as refugees, and continued on to immediate resettlement in thriving West Germany.

The flight of East Germans fed the rapid growth of a homegrown, spontaneous protest movement in East Germany. Workers joined intellectuals, environmentalists, and Protestant ministers in huge candlelight demonstrations. While some activists insisted that a democratic but still socialist East Germany was both possible and desirable, numerous East German citizens continued to depart en masse. In a desperate attempt to stabilize the situation, the East German government opened the Berlin Wall in November 1989, allowing free travel across the former border. A new, reformist government took power and scheduled free elections.

In Czechoslovakia, Communist rule began to dissolve peacefully in November to December 1989. This so-called **Velvet Revolution** grew out of popular demonstrations led by students and joined by intellectuals and a dissident playwright-turned-moral-revolutionary named Václav Havel (1936–2011). When the protesters took control of the streets, the Communist government resigned, leading to a power-sharing arrangement termed the “Government of National Understanding.” As 1989 ended, the Czechoslovakian assembly elected Havel president.

In Romania, popular revolution turned violent and bloody. There the dictator Nicolae Ceaușescu (chow-SHESS-koo) (1918–1989) had long combined tight party control with stubborn independence from Moscow. Faced with mass protests in December 1989, Ceaușescu ordered his ruthless security forces to quell unrest, sparking an armed uprising. Perhaps 750 people were killed in the fighting; the numbers were often exaggerated. After the dictator and his wife were captured and executed by a military court, Ceaușescu’s forces were defeated. A coalition government emerged, although the legacy of Ceaușescu’s long and oppressive rule left a troubled country.

had permitted liberalization of the rigid planned economy after the 1956 uprising in exchange for political loyalty and continued Communist control. In May 1988, in an effort to retain power by granting modest political concessions, the party replaced the ill and aging Kádár with a reform-minded Communist. But liberal opposition groups rejected piecemeal progress, and in the summer of 1989 the Hungarian Communist Party agreed to hold free elections the following March. Welcoming Western investment and moving rapidly toward multiparty democracy, Hungary’s Communists now enjoyed considerable popular support, and they believed, quite mistakenly, that they could defeat the opposition in the upcoming elections.

In an effort to strengthen their support at home, the Hungarians opened their border to East Germans and tore down the barbed wire curtain separating Hungary

Velvet Revolution The term given to the relatively peaceful overthrow of communism in Czechoslovakia; the label came to signify the collapse of the East Bloc in general in 1989 to 1990.

German Unification and the End of the Cold War

The dissolution of communism in East Germany that began in 1989 reopened the “German question” and raised the threat of renewed Cold War conflict



Revolution in Romania A man holding a Romanian flag with the Communist symbol torn from its center stands on a balcony overlooking the tanks, soldiers, and citizens filling Palace Square in Bucharest, the capital city, during the revolution of 1989. Deadly violence accompanied the overthrow of communism in Romania. Elsewhere the collapse of the East Bloc was relatively peaceful. (Peter Turnley/Getty Images)

over Germany. Taking power in October 1989, East German reform Communists, enthusiastically supported by leading intellectuals and former dissidents, wanted to preserve socialism by making it genuinely democratic and responsive to the needs of the people. They argued for a “third way” that would go beyond the failed Stalinism they had experienced and the ruthless capitalism they saw in the West. These reformers supported closer ties with West Germany but feared unification, hoping to preserve a distinct East German identity with a socialist system.

Over the next year, however, East Germany was absorbed into an enlarged West Germany, much as a faltering company is swallowed by a stronger rival and ceases to exist. Three factors were particularly important in this outcome. First, in the first week after the Berlin Wall was opened, almost 9 million East Germans—roughly half of the total population—poured across the border into West Germany. Almost all returned to their homes in the east, but the exhilaration of crossing a long-closed border aroused long-dormant hopes of unity among ordinary citizens.

Second, West German chancellor Helmut Kohl and his closest advisers skillfully exploited the historic opportunity handed them. Sure of support from the United States, whose leadership he had steadfastly followed, in November 1989 Kohl presented a ten-point plan for step-by-step unification in cooperation with both East Germany and the international community. Kohl then promised the struggling citizens of East Germany an immediate

economic bonanza—a generous though limited exchange of East German marks in savings accounts and pensions into much more valuable West German marks. This offer helped popularize the Alliance for Germany, a well-financed political party established in East Germany with the support of Kohl’s West German Christian Democrats. In March 1990 the Alliance won almost 50 percent of the votes in an East German parliamentary election, outdistancing the Party of Democratic Socialism (the renamed East German Communist Party) (16 percent) and the revived Social Democratic Party (22 percent). The Alliance for Germany quickly negotiated an economic and political union on favorable terms with Kohl. The rapid pace of reunification quickly overwhelmed those who argued for the preservation of an independent socialist society in East Germany.

Third, in the summer of 1990 the crucial international aspect of German unification was successfully resolved. Unification would once again make Germany the strongest state in central Europe and would directly affect the security of the Soviet Union. But Gorbachev swallowed hard—Western cartoonists showed Stalin turning over in his grave—and negotiated the best deal he could. In a historic agreement signed by Gorbachev and Kohl in July 1990, Kohl solemnly affirmed Germany’s peaceful intentions and pledged never to develop nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons. The Germans sweetened the deal by promising enormous loans to the hard-pressed Soviet Union. In October 1990 East Germany merged into

West Germany, forming a single nation under the West German laws and constitution.

The peaceful reunification of Germany accelerated the pace of agreements to liquidate the Cold War. In November 1990 delegates from twenty-two European countries joined those from the United States and the Soviet Union in Paris and agreed to a scaling down of all their armed forces. The delegates also solemnly affirmed that all existing borders in Europe, including those of unified Germany and the emerging Baltic States, were legal and valid. The Paris Accord was for all practical purposes a general peace treaty bringing an end to both World War II and the Cold War.

Peace in Europe encouraged the United States and the Soviet Union to scrap a significant portion of their nuclear weapons. In September 1991 a confident President George H. W. Bush canceled the around-the-clock alert status for American bombers outfitted with atomic bombs, and Gorbachev quickly followed suit with his own forces. For the first time in four decades, Soviet and American nuclear weapons were not standing ready for mutual destruction.

The Disintegration of the Soviet Union

As 1990 began, the tough work of dismantling some forty-five years of Communist rule had begun in all but two East Bloc states—tiny Albania and the vast Soviet Union. The great question now became whether the Soviet Union would follow its former satellites.

In February 1990, as competing Russian politicians noisily presented their programs and nationalists in the non-Russian republics demanded autonomy or independence from the Soviet Union, the Communist Party suffered a stunning defeat in local elections throughout the country. As in East Bloc countries, democrats and anticommunists won clear majorities in the leading cities of the Russian Soviet Republic, by far the largest republic in the Soviet Union. Moreover, in Lithuania the people elected an uncompromising nationalist as president, and the newly chosen parliament declared Lithuania an independent state.

Gorbachev responded by placing an economic embargo on Lithuania, but he refused to use the army to crush the separatist government. The result was a tense political standoff that undermined popular



support for Gorbachev. Separating himself further from Communist hardliners, Gorbachev asked Soviet citizens to ratify a new constitution that formally abolished the Communist Party's monopoly of political power and expanded the power of the Congress of People's Deputies. While retaining his post as party secretary, Gorbachev then convinced a majority of deputies to elect him president of the Soviet Union.

Despite his victory, Gorbachev's power continued to erode, and his unwillingness to risk a universal suffrage election for the presidency strengthened his archrival, Boris Yeltsin (1931–2007). A radical reform Communist, Yeltsin embraced the democratic movement, and in May 1990 he was elected parliamentary leader of the Russian Soviet

Republic. He boldly announced that Russia would put its interests first and declare its independence from the Soviet Union, broadening the base of the anticommunist movement by joining the patriotism of ordinary Russians with the democratic aspirations of big-city intellectuals. Gorbachev tried to save the Soviet Union with a new treaty that would link the member republics in a looser, freely accepted confederation, but six of the fifteen Soviet republics rejected his plan.

Opposed by democrats and nationalists, Gorbachev was also challenged by the Communist old guard. In August 1991 a gang of hardliners kidnapped him and his family in the Caucasus and tried to seize the Soviet government. The attempted coup collapsed in the face of massive popular resistance that rallied around Yeltsin. As a spellbound world watched on television, Yeltsin defiantly denounced the rebels from atop a stalled tank in central Moscow and declared the "rebirth of Russia." The army supported Yeltsin, and Gorbachev was rescued and returned to power as head of the Soviet Union.

The leaders of the coup had wanted to preserve Communist power, state ownership, and the multinational Soviet Union; they succeeded in destroying all three. An anticommunist revolution swept Russia as Yeltsin and his supporters outlawed the Communist Party and confiscated its property. Locked in a personal and political duel with Gorbachev, Yeltsin and his democratic allies declared Russia independent, withdrew from the Soviet Union, and changed the country's name from the Russian Soviet Republic to the Russian Federation. All the other Soviet republics also withdrew. Gorbachev resigned on December 25,

1991, and the next day the Supreme Soviet dissolved itself, marking the end of the Soviet Union. The independent republics of the old Soviet Union then established a loose confederation, the Commonwealth of Independent States, which played only a minor role in the 1990s.

NOTES

1. Quoted in Kessing's Research Report, *Germany and East Europe Since 1945: From the Potsdam Agreement to Chancellor Brandt's "Ostpolitik"* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1973), pp. 284–285.
2. M. Mitterauer, *The History of Youth* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1992), p. 40.



LOOKING BACK LOOKING AHEAD

The unexpected collapse of Communist Europe capped three decades of turbulent change. In the 1960s the consensus established after the Second World War was challenged by protest movements in the East and West Blocs alike. In the 1970s a global recession had devastating effects across the globe. In the 1980s conservative Western leaders pushed neoliberal plans to revive growth and meet growing global competition. In the East Bloc, structural problems and spontaneous revolt brought down communism, dissolved the Soviet Union, and ended the Cold War.

With the world economy on the road to recovery and new free-market systems in place across the former East Bloc, all of Europe would now have the opportunity to enter the information age. After forty years of Cold War division, the continent regained an underlying unity as faith in democratic government and market economics became the common European creed. In 1991 hopes for peaceful democratic progress were almost universal. According to philosopher Francis Fukuyama, the world had reached “the end of history”—the end

of the Cold War, he argued, would lead to peaceful development based on growing tolerance, free-market economics, and liberal democracy.

The post–Cold War years saw the realization of some of these hopes, but the new era brought its own problems and tragedies. In the former Yugoslavia, ethnic and nationalist tensions flared, leading to a disastrous civil war. The struggle to rebuild the shattered societies of the former East Bloc countries was far more difficult than the people living in them had hoped. Poor economic growth continued to complicate attempts to deal with the wide-open global economy. New conflicts with Islamic nations in the Middle East involved some European nations in war. The European Union expanded, but political disagreements, environmental issues, increased anxiety about non-Western immigrants, and a host of other problems undermined moves toward true European unity. History was far from over—the realities of a post–Cold War world continued to yield difficult challenges as Europe entered the twenty-first century.

Make Connections

Think about the larger developments and continuities within and across chapters.

1. How did the revolts that shook western European countries and the East Bloc develop out of issues left unresolved in the 1950s era of postwar reconstruction (Chapter 28)?
2. Both East and West Blocs faced similar economic problems in the 1970s, yet communism collapsed in the East and capitalism recovered. How do you account for the difference? Were economic problems the main basis for popular opposition to communism?
3. What were some of the basic ideas behind the neoliberal economic policies that emerged in the West in the 1970s and 1980s? Why are they still popular today?

29 REVIEW & EXPLORE

Identify Key Terms

Identify and explain the significance of each item below.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Ostpolitik (p. 904) | neoliberalism (p. 914) |
| détente (p. 905) | privatization (p. 914) |
| Second Vatican Council (p. 907) | second-wave feminism (p. 917) |
| New Left (p. 908) | developed socialism (p. 922) |
| Brezhnev Doctrine (p. 912) | Solidarity (p. 924) |
| OPEC (p. 913) | perestroika (p. 926) |
| stagflation (p. 913) | glasnost (p. 926) |
| postindustrial society (p. 914) | Velvet Revolution (p. 930) |

Review the Main Ideas

Answer the section heading questions from the chapter.

1. Why did the postwar consensus of the 1950s break down? (p. 904)
2. What were the consequences of economic stagnation in the 1970s? (p. 913)
3. What led to the decline of “developed socialism” in the East Bloc? (p. 922)
4. What were the causes and consequences of the 1989 revolutions in the East Bloc? (p. 928)

Suggested Resources

BOOKS

- Ash, Timothy Garton. *The Magic Lantern: The Revolution of '89 Witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin, and Prague*. 1993. An exciting firsthand narrative of the collapse of the East Bloc in 1989 and 1990.
- Cohen, Stephen F. *Soviet Fates and Lost Alternatives: From Stalinism to the New Cold War*. 2011. An up-to-date book by an acclaimed historian that challenges conventional interpretations of the rise and fall and aftermath of the Soviet Union.
- Evans, Eric J. *Thatcher and Thatcherism*. 2018. A critical study of the origins and impact of Thatcherism, inside and outside Great Britain.
- Gahrton, Per. *Green Parties, Green Future: From Local Groups to the International Stage*. 2015. Explores the history, ideologies, and governmental roles of environmentalist Green parties around the world.
- Guha, Ramachandra. *Environmentalism: A Global History*. 2000. A powerful and readable overview of environmentalism that puts Europe in a world context.
- Kurlansky, Mark. *1968: The Year That Rocked the World*. 2003. Popular history at its best; a gripping account of the 1960s generation and 1968 across the globe.
- Okey, Robin. *The Demise of Communist East Europe: 1989 in Context*. 2004. A measured overview of the collapse of the East Bloc that avoids accusatory Cold War rhetoric.
- Pittaway, Mark. *Eastern Europe, 1939–2000*. 2004. A survey of east-central Europe from the start of World War II to the end of communism, with a welcome emphasis on social history.
- Port, Andrew I. *Conflict and Stability in the German Democratic Republic*. 2007. A penetrating analysis of popular support for communism in this major East Bloc country.