

Stagnation in the Soviet Bloc and the Revival of the Cold War:

Brezhnev, Normalization,
Solidarity and Reagan

Housekeeping

Exam Study Guide

Concepts and items from whole semester

20 Questions like the last quiz

One essay, but there are two here.

Paper. Questions: I will be in my office Mon, Tues, Wedn. Between 10-12 next week.

Looking for Primary Documents

What are they? Direct evidence from the period
Speeches, memos, etc.

NSA:

FRUS:

Concepts For Today's Lecture

Soviet stagnation (normalization)

Solidarity and its implications for the Soviet Bloc

Soviet decision-making, martial law and its implications for the Soviet Bloc

Reagan and the new Cold War

The End of the Brezhnev Era

A Soviet Joke from the Stagnation Period

Lenin, Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev are riding on a train. The train stops unexpectedly. Lenin gets out and gives a speech that inspires the workers, and the train continues on. After a while, the train stops again, this time Stalin gets out, accuses a third of the workers of sabotage and shoots them. The others get scared, work furiously to get the problem fixed and the train continues on. The train stops again. This time Khrushchev gets out, insults the workers, fires the engineer and has the others use corn instead of coal to make the engine go. The train continues on for a little while and stops yet again. This time Brezhnev pulls down the window shades and starts moving up and down in his seat, saying, "Let's pretend the train is moving." \]

Stagnation

REVIEW: After Khrushchev, desire for reform, but also want to ensure stability within the nomenklatura (ruling elite)

In USSR: “Mature socialism,” “real existing socialism”

No real promises of a bright new future

Reform efforts die in bureaucracy: “Stability of cadres,”

The new “social contract”: a quiet life, slowly improving material standards, in return for compliance (Vodka)

In ČSSR, “normalization”: Emphasize the private life, consumerism

Growing Problems with the Social Contract

The planned economy can't deal with increasing complexity, slows down

Hard to motivate citizens to work harder

“They pretend to pay us; we pretend to work”

Soviet Union spending a lot on defense, must offer more goods to citizens

Soviet Union depending more and more on oil money, trade with West

Soviet Union must also subsidize Soviet bloc, Cuba with cheap oil,

The Situation in Poland

Largest country in Soviet bloc in territory and population

Strong nationalist tradition steeped in Catholicism, directed against both Russia and Germany

History of unrest under communism

1956, 1968 (intellectuals), 1970 (workers), 1976 (workers)

The new social contract not working in Poland

Borrowed heavily from West in early 1970s

Did not invest well, and West went into recession

They need to raise prices, but when they do, workers strike

The Rise of Solidarity

1976: The Alliance of Workers and Intellectuals: KOR

Jacek Kuron, Adam Michnik

1980: Strikes: Information network

Demands clear: a separate trade union

The “limited revolution” gathers force

10 million members

Demands grow

Pressures on leadership

The Soviet Leadership Debates

Divided Leadership

Leaders of GDR, Hungary, ČSSR, Romania demand intervention

Defense Ministry, Military also for it

Poland crucial to Warsaw Pact

Brezhnev, KGB leader Andropov, Foreign Minister Gromyko disagree

Poland is very large

Solidarity had organizational structure

Large amount of violence would be necessary

Occupation would be hugely expensive

Would damage any diplomatic influence Soviets had

Instead, put pressure on General Wojciech Jaruzelski to restore order

Martial Law, December, 1981

Solidarity leaders in jail

Repression is extremely expensive

But organization not completely destroyed

Great deal of *samizdat*

Stalemate: Regime still nominally in control,

But can't raise prices or would result in unrest

President Reagan, 1981

Hardline Anti-Communist since 1950s

Seeks to overcome Vietnam Syndrome with something like
Reagan Doctrine: Supports Mujahadeen in Afghanistan,
guerrilla groups against Marxist government in
Nicaragua, etc.

Begins terms with huge arms build-up

Suggests US must be able to win nuclear war, maneuvers

Pressures Saudi Arabia to reduce oil prices

Introduces Strategic Defense Initiative

Soviet regard this as dangerous, afraid Reagan thinking of war

Soviet Leadership Aged, Die Off

Mikhail Suslov, Secretary of CC CPSU, head ideologist: January 1982

Leonid Brezhnev: General Secretary of CC CPSU, November, 1982

Yuri Andropov, Head of KGB, Gen. Sec. of CC CPSU, February, 1984

Dmitri Ustinov, Defense Secretary, December 1984

Konstantin Chernenko, General Secretary of CPSU, March 1985



