

# Teacher Overview Objectives:

## *Collapse of the Soviet Union and the End of the Cold War*

### NYS Social Studies Framework Alignment:

Key Idea	Conceptual Understanding	Content Specification	Objectives
<p>10.6 UNRESOLVED GLOBAL CONFLICT (1945–1991: THE COLD WAR): The second half of the 20th century was shaped by the Cold War, a legacy of World War II. The United States and the Soviet Union emerged as global superpowers engaged in ideological, political, economic, and military competition. (Standards: 2, 3, 4, 5; Themes: TCC, GOV, ECO, TECH, EXCH)</p>	<p>10.6c The end of the Cold War and the collapse of the communist bloc in Europe had a global impact</p>	<p>Student will investigate the political reforms of Glasnost and economic reforms of Perestroika</p> <p>Students will examine the impacts of those reforms within the Soviet Union, on the Soviet communist bloc, and in the world.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the alliances that formed during the Cold War and their goals.</li> <li>2. Describe and analyze the impacts of the political reforms of Glasnost and economic reforms of Perestroika on the Soviet communist bloc, and in the world.</li> </ol>

**1**

**What alliances formed during the Cold War? What were their goals?**

Objectives: Describe Cold War alliances and identify their goals.



## The Western Bloc

**U.S.A.** & NATO allies

**Economic System:** Capitalism

**Political System:** Democracy

The United States wanted to contain **communism** so they pursued the policy of **containment**.

Containment was a strategy of keeping communism within its existing boundaries and preventing its further expansion. This policy meant the United States would *support any nation facing an external or internal communist threat*.

## The Eastern Bloc

Warsaw Pact allies & **USSR**

**Economic System:** Command Economy

**Political System:** Communism

The USSR wanted to promote **communism** and spread these ideas to other countries.

The promotion of communism was a strategy of expanding communism outside its existing boundaries. This policy meant the Soviet Union would *support any nation facing external or internal aggression from the Western bloc*.

**vs.**

2

## How did the political reforms of glasnost and economic reforms of perestroika impact the Soviet communist bloc and the world?

Objectives: Describe and analyze the impacts of the political reforms of Glasnost and economic reforms of Perestroika on the Soviet communist bloc, and in the world.

### Introduction:



In 1985, **Mikhail Gorbachev** came to power in the Soviet Union and set out to bring the country out of crisis. His two most important reforms were called *glasnost* and *perestroika*. In Russian, glasnost means openness and perestroika means rebuilding or reorganization.

What elements of the the economy do you think the Soviet Union would have opened up? What elements of their political society would they rebuild or reorganize?

Source: <http://content.time.com/time/covers/0,16641,19870727,00.html>

**Directions:** Read the passages below and respond to the questions.

## The Soviet Union in the 1970s and 1980s

The Soviet Union was at the height of its power by the early 1970s. Not only was the economy robust and the standard of living high, but the Soviet Union was also able to gain a communist victory in Vietnam during the Vietnam War. The victory in Vietnam was complemented by growing support of communist and Soviet ideals in South America. Up until the late 1970s, it appeared that the American policy of containment was no match for communist expansion.

By the early 1980s, the Soviet economy began to slow down before finally reaching economic stagnation [state of not growing or progressing]. Because so many Eastern European countries were satellite nations with economies intertwined with the Soviet Union, these countries suffered as well. Once a state with high wages and a high standard of living, the Soviet Union was now home to very poor people who at times longed for the prosperity in the West. By the 1980s, a large portion of the state's funds were spent on the military to support the involvement in Afghanistan and to fund the arms race with the United States. The involvement with Afghanistan resulted in heavy casualties and high costs. This led to a loss of faith in the Soviet Union. Ronald Reagan, president of the United States, developed cruise missiles and a defense system, and the Soviet Union struggled to keep up with the pace and costs of the arms race with America.

**1. Why was the Soviet Union confident about its power and status up until the early 1970s? How did the Soviet Union's status begin to change in the 1980s?**

## Mikhail Gorbachev Makes Reforms



**Mikhail Gorbachev**

Source:  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mikhail\\_Gorbachev#/media/File:RIAN\\_archive\\_850809\\_General\\_Secretary\\_of\\_the\\_CPS\\_U\\_C\\_C\\_M.\\_Gorbachev\\_\(crop\).jpg](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mikhail_Gorbachev#/media/File:RIAN_archive_850809_General_Secretary_of_the_CPS_U_C_C_M._Gorbachev_(crop).jpg)

In 1985, **Mikhail Gorbachev** came to power in the Soviet Union and set out to bring the country out of crisis. His two most important reforms were called *Glasnost* and *Perestroika*

**Glasnost** or transparency improved freedom of expression in following ways:

- freedom of press
- access to Western press
- the creation of political unions that opposed communism
- banned books that challenged Soviet history or Communist rule were published in large editions
- dissidents were released from prison
- greater religious tolerance
- freedom to travel to Western countries

**Perestroika** or restructuring of the government and economy led to changes in the following ways:

- farmers were allowed to sell goods on the free market
- appointed new members to the Secretariat and reduced the size of the bureaucracy
- supported limited private ownership

In the spirit of Glasnost and Perestroika, Gorbachev sought to avoid confrontation and established positive relationships with Western leaders, particularly American presidents. By 1987, these annual summits led to results including arm control treaties.

2. What were the goals of Gorbachev's policies of Perestroika and Glasnost?



Reagan and Gorbachev shaking hands at the US-Soviet summit in Washington, D.C. (1987)

Source:  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Reagan-Gorbachev\\_shaking\\_hands\\_1987-12-07\\_C44091-30.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Reagan-Gorbachev_shaking_hands_1987-12-07_C44091-30.jpg)



President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev signing the INF Treaty in the East Room of the White House (1987). The treaty required the US and USSR to eliminate some of their nuclear missiles.

Source:  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Mikhail\\_Gorbachev\\_and\\_Ronald\\_Reagan#/media/File:Reagan\\_and\\_Gorbachev\\_signing.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Mikhail_Gorbachev_and_Ronald_Reagan#/media/File:Reagan_and_Gorbachev_signing.jpg)



Joint Statement of President Reagan and General Secretary Gorbachev at the Geneva Summit. 11/21/85.

Source:  
[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Mikhail\\_Gorbachev\\_and\\_Ronald\\_Reagan#/media/File:Gorbachev\\_and\\_Reagan\\_1985-10.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Mikhail_Gorbachev_and_Ronald_Reagan#/media/File:Gorbachev_and_Reagan_1985-10.jpg)



Reagan and Gorbachev in Red Square during the Moscow Summit. 5/31/88

Source:  
[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/53/Gorbachev\\_and\\_Reagan\\_1988-5.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/5/53/Gorbachev_and_Reagan_1988-5.jpg)

3. What do these images reveal about the relationship between United States President Reagan and the Soviet Union's General Secretary Gorbachev?

Unsupportive of the financial and morale cost of the involvement as well as the increasing tension with the United States, in 1989, Gorbachev pulled troops out of Afghanistan.

**4. Why was Gorbachev's decision to withdraw from Afghanistan an important step in improving the relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union?**



**Afghan firefighters carry the body of a young girl killed in a powerful bomb blast that shattered rows of homes and shops in downtown Kabul on May 14, 1988 on the eve of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan.**

Source:  
<http://www.theatlantic.com/photo/2014/08/the-soviet-war-in-afghanistan-1979-1989/100786/#img34>

## Soviet Republics Move Toward Independence



**Map of the Union Republics from 1956-1991**

Source:

[https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/f9/Republics\\_of\\_the\\_USSR.svg/445px-Republics\\_of\\_the\\_USSR.svg.png](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/f/f9/Republics_of_the_USSR.svg/445px-Republics_of_the_USSR.svg.png)

Glasnost and Perestroika impacted Gorbachev's relationship with the Soviet Union's satellite states and Soviet republics. Until 1989, the Communist party indirectly controlled all levels of government. As a highly centralized state, the Soviet Union was divided (from 1940 to 1991) into 15 Soviet republics that had little real power. These republics answered to the government of the Soviet Union. In the spirit of Glasnost and Perestroika, the political climate began to change. In both Moscow and the UN in New York in 1988, Gorbachev announced that he'd abandoned the idea of limited sovereignty for the Soviet Union's republics in Eastern Europe. He declared that all countries had the right to decide what kind of political and economic system they wanted.

**5. What did Gorbachev's declare that all countries had the right to do? Given the status of the Soviet republics, why was this declaration significant? How might republics respond?**

In 1987, two-candidate elections were introduced for the first time. Before Gorbachev, voters were presented with only one candidate. The economic troubles and the freedoms afforded by Glasnost and Perestroika had inspired people to openly criticize the Soviet Union. Dramatic and public calls for change erupted across the Soviet Union.

## The Berlin Wall

One area of contention was the **Berlin Wall**. In 1961, the Communist government of East Germany built the barbed wire and concrete wall to separate capitalist and the United States-aligned West Berlin from the socialist Eastern Europe. Before the closing of the wall, there was a mass migration of East Germans who, unhappy with communism, fled to the West for employment opportunities. The wall separated families, prevented East Germans from employment opportunities, and sent a strong message that even if East Germans did not enjoy communism, they would not be allowed to flee. People who attempted to escape East Berlin were shot on site.



Waving over the Berlin Wall

Source:

[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Berlin\\_Wall#/media/File:Winken\\_ueber\\_die\\_Berliner\\_Mauer.jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Berlin_Wall#/media/File:Winken_ueber_die_Berliner_Mauer.jpg)



Watch the [Berlin Wall video](#) (00:00-2:00). Then respond to the questions.

6. What was the purpose of the Berlin Wall?

7. How did some people try to escape?

8. What was done to those who tried to escape?



On June 12, 1987, United States President Ronald Reagan delivered the *Berlin Wall Speech* at Brandenburg Gate in West Berlin. Watch the [speech here](#) and read the transcript below. Then respond to the questions.

Reagan:

*And 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. Some political prisoners have been released. Certain foreign news broadcasts are no longer being jammed. Some economic enterprises have been permitted to operate with greater freedom from state control.*

*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? We welcome change and openness; for we believe that freedom and security go*

*together, that the advance of human liberty can only strengthen the cause of world peace. 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, tear down this wall!*

*I understand the fear of war and the pain of division that afflict this continent-- and I pledge to you my country's efforts to help overcome these burdens. To be sure, we in the West must resist Soviet expansion. So we must maintain defenses of unassailable strength. Yet we seek peace; so we must strive to reduce arms on both sides.*

9. In Reagan's reflection about the changes Gorbachev has implemented, he asks: "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?" Why do you think Reagan asks this question?

10. According to this speech excerpt, what does Reagan want Gorbachev to do? Why?



Two years following Reagan's speech, After several weeks of unrest, on November 9, 1989, the **Berlin Wall collapsed**.

The collapse of the Berlin Wall was encouraged by mass demonstrations in East Germany in the fall of 1989. Under pressure, the Communist government finally opened its border with the West. The Berlin Wall, which stood as a symbol of the Cold War, began to be dismantled. On November 9, 1989 East and West Berliners celebrated on the Berlin Wall. As the wall was dismantled, Germany was finally reunited, and Germans could travel freely between the East and West.



Watch the ABC News [Berlin Wall video](#). Then respond to the questions.

11. According to your prior reading and the video, why was the collapse of the Berlin Wall such a symbolic moment?



12. How did Germans respond to the collapse of the Berlin Wall?

13. How do you predict the fall of the Berlin Wall would impact the relationship between the Soviet Union and the United States? Explain.

### The Final Collapse of the Soviet Union

The fall of the Berlin Wall was a symbolic event that signaled the changing nature of the Soviet Union's power and the confidence of the people to assert themselves. In early 1990, Gorbachev legalized the formation of other political parties and removed the article of the Soviet constitution that guaranteed the supremacy of the Communist party. As Gorbachev lessened the iron fist and tight control, republics began to take advantage of their new freedoms. The groups and states began to call for **sovereignty**, or self-rule, and **secession**, or independence, from the Soviet Union. While Gorbachev supported self-determination and self-rule, he was wary of secession. Gorbachev feared that secession would disintegrate the Soviet Union into fragments, rather than maintaining as one power bloc.

MARSHALL RAMSEY  
Courtesy UT Daily Beacon  
MARSHALL OF  
RAMSEY 01  
UT DAILY BEACON



14. Based on your prior reading and the cartoon to your left, what is the “crack problem” Gorbachev is facing in the late 1980s? Why is he facing this problem?

15. According to the text and image , how did Gorbachev's Glasnost and Perestroika impact the sovereignty of Eastern European satellite states?

16. According to the text and image , how did Gorbachev's Glasnost and Perestroika impact the power and control of the Soviet Union?



**Yeltsin stands on a tank to defy the August Coup in 1991.**

Source: [https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/71/Boris\\_Yeltsin\\_19\\_August\\_1991-1.jpg](https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/7/71/Boris_Yeltsin_19_August_1991-1.jpg)

As Gorbachev faced the possibility of a collapsing empire, others tried to overthrow Gorbachev to restore the old order. This coup was unsuccessful but exposed the growing fears of a collapsing empire. In December 1989, the Communist Party of Lithuania declared itself independent and by the end of 1991, the remaining Soviet states declared themselves independent states.

One of the largest Soviet republics, Ukraine, declared independence on August 24, 1991. On December 25, 1991, Gorbachev resigned and turned over responsibilities to the commander-in-chief Boris Yeltsin. The **Warsaw Pact** was dissolved, and the Soviet Union officially ceased to exist.

## **Synthesis:**

**17. How did Mikhail Gorbachev contribute to the fall of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe?**

**18. What events officially marked the end of the Soviet Union?**

**19. How do you predict the collapse of the Soviet Union would impact other communist nations outside of Europe?**

**20. How do you predict the collapse of the Soviet Union would impact the United States?**

Sources: <http://find.galegroup.com/gic/infomark.do?&contentSet=EBKS&idigest=fb720fd31d9036c1ed2d1f3a0500fcc2&type=retrieve&tabID=T001&prodId=GIC&docId=CX3403300164&source=gale&userGroupName=itsbtrial&version=1.0>, <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-31733045>, <http://www.econlib.org/library/Enc1/Perestroika.html>, [http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/history/mwh/ir2/endofthecoldwarrev\\_print.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/history/mwh/ir2/endofthecoldwarrev_print.shtml)



### Regents Multiple Choice Check for Understanding

1. Which sequence of 20th-century Cold War events is in the correct chronological order?

- (1) fall of the Berlin Wall Cuban missile crisis adoption of the Marshall Plan
- (2) Cuban missile crisis fall of the Berlin Wall adoption of the Marshall Plan
- (3) fall of the Berlin Wall adoption of the Marshall Plan Cuban missile crisis
- (4) adoption of the Marshall Plan Cuban missile crisis fall of the Berlin Wall

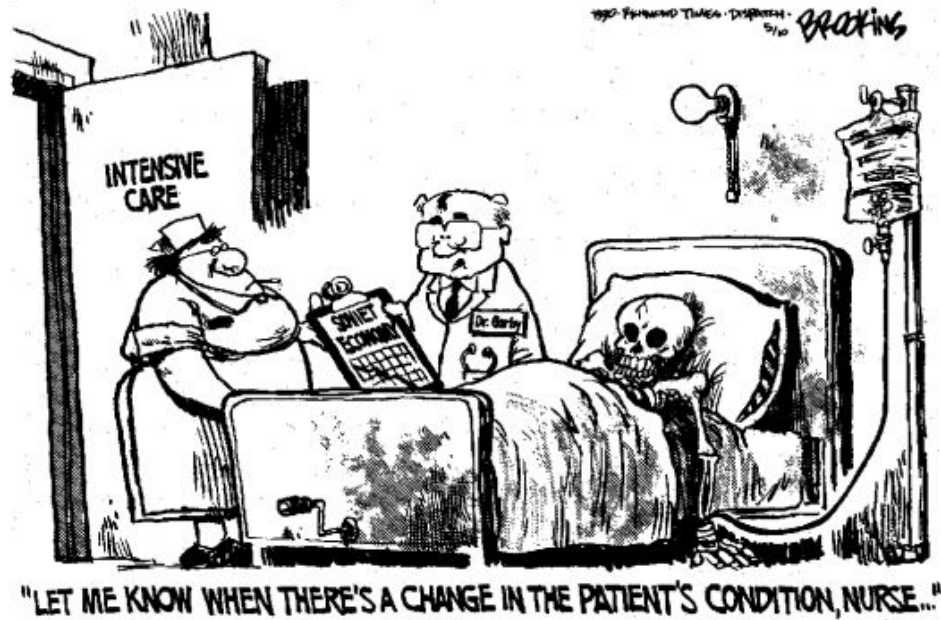
Base your answer to the following question on the cartoon below and on your knowledge of social studies.



2. What is the main idea of the cartoon?

- (1) Eastern European satellite nations have been a liability to the Soviet Union.
- (2) The Soviet Union produces more industrial goods than China produces.
- (3) The standard of living in Communist nations needs improvement.
- (4) Most communistic nations are wealthier than capitalistic nations.

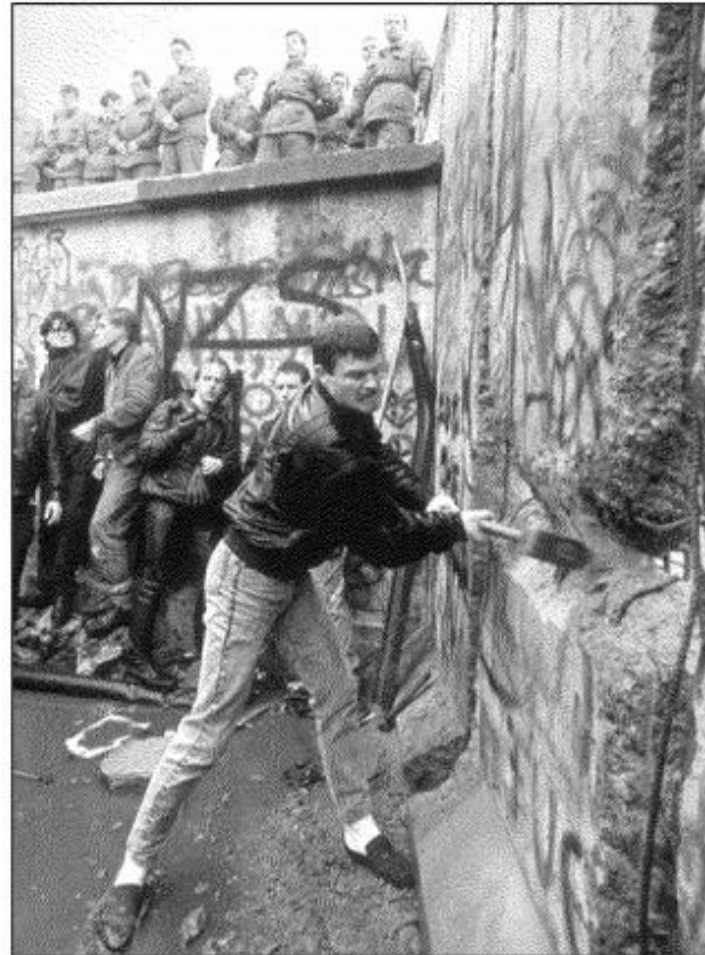
Base your answer to the following question on the cartoon below and on your knowledge of social studies.



3. Which is a valid conclusion based on this 1990 cartoon?
- (1) Communism was failing as an economic system in the Soviet Union.
  - (2) Economic changes within the Soviet Union were leading to the death of capitalism.
  - (3) Gorbachev's economic reforms were intended to reverse the earlier Soviet policy of national health insurance.
  - (4) The Soviet Union was investing heavily in medical technology.

Base your answer to the following question on the photograph below and on your knowledge of social studies.

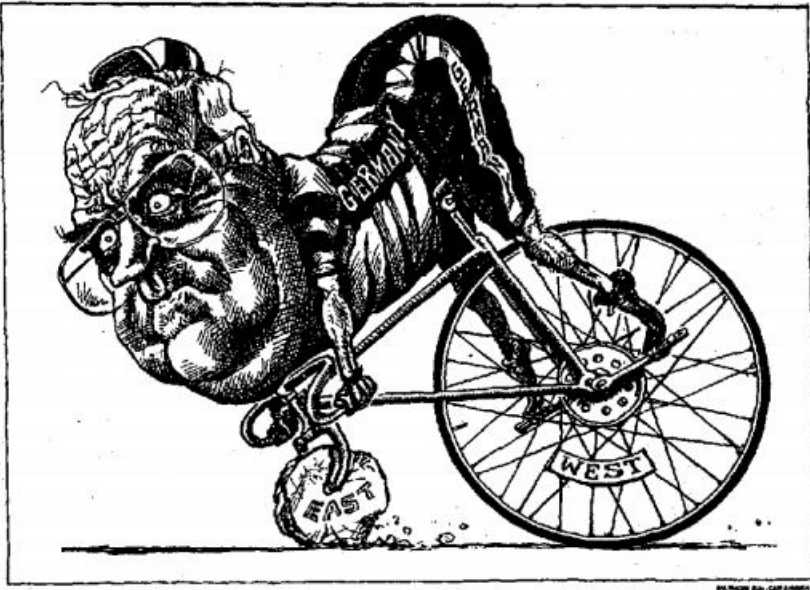
**The Berlin Wall**



— Reuters/David Brauchli/Archive Photos  
Source: <http://imagesrvr.epnet.com/embimages/imh/archivephoto/full/g1952059.jpg>

4. This 1989 photograph symbolizes the
- (1) end of the Cold War
  - (2) importance of the Berlin airlift
  - (3) creation of a divided Germany
  - (4) fear of Nazism among Germans

Base your answer to the following question on the cartoon below and on your knowledge of social studies.



5. What is the main idea of this 1991 cartoon?

- (1) The unification of Germany has been hurt by poor leadership in the country.
- (2) The economic differences between East and West Germany have limited the growth of the total German economy.
- (3) East Germany's strong economy has strengthened a united Germany.
- (4) Both East Germany and West Germany have contributed equally to the new economy of a reunified Germany.

- Reunification of East and West Germany
- Restructuring of the economy of the former Soviet Union
- Eastern Europe's extensive political changes

6. Which is a valid conclusion that can be drawn from a study of these events of the late 1980s and early 1990s?

- (1) The former Soviet Union succeeded in isolating its satellites from Western influences.
- (2) The United Nations forced Communist leaders to accept changes.
- (3) Communist leaders used new strategies to win the cold war.
- (4) Communism did not succeed as a workable political and economic system in Europe.

7. The goal of Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of Perestroika and Glasnost was to

- (1) expand collectivization and communes
- (2) resume development of Soviet nuclear weapons
- (3) stimulate economic growth and political discussion
- (4) stop expansion of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) into Eastern Europe

8. Mikhail Gorbachev contributed to the fall of communism in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe by

- (1) introducing the policies of Perestroika and Glasnost
- (2) violating nuclear arms agreements
- (3) invading Afghanistan
- (4) signing the Camp David Accords

<p>9. One way in which Vladimir Lenin's New Economic Policy and Mikhail Gorbachev's policy of Perestroika are similar is that both</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) allowed elements of capitalism within a communist economic system</li> <li>(2) strengthened their country's military defenses</li> <li>(3) supported censorship of news and of personal correspondence</li> <li>(4) increased tensions during the Cold War</li> </ul>	<p>12. Which action occurred in the Soviet Union under Mikhail Gorbachev?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) Peasants were forced onto collective farms.</li> <li>(2) Citizens experienced more personal freedoms under Glasnost.</li> <li>(3) The United States and the Soviet Union ended diplomatic relations.</li> <li>(4) The Soviet government increased its control over the Orthodox Church.</li> </ul>
<p>10. Mikhail Gorbachev's reforms of Perestroika and Glasnost resulted in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) an era of world peace and Soviet prosperity</li> <li>(2) conditions that helped lead to the breakup of the Soviet Union</li> <li>(3) a successful transition to a command economy in Russia</li> <li>(4) censorship of the news media in Russia</li> </ul>	<p>13. One reason Mikhail Gorbachev implemented the policies of Glasnost and Perestroika in the Soviet Union was to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) eliminate freedom of speech and press</li> <li>(2) destroy the power of the opposition party</li> <li>(3) dominate the governments of Eastern Europe</li> <li>(4) encourage political discussion and economic reform</li> </ul>
<p>11. In the 1980s, Mikhail Gorbachev's attempts to change the Soviet Union resulted in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(1) an increase in tensions between India and the Soviet Union</li> <li>(2) a strengthening of the Communist Party</li> <li>(3) a shift from producing consumer goods to producing heavy machinery</li> <li>(4) a series of economic and political reforms</li> </ul>	