

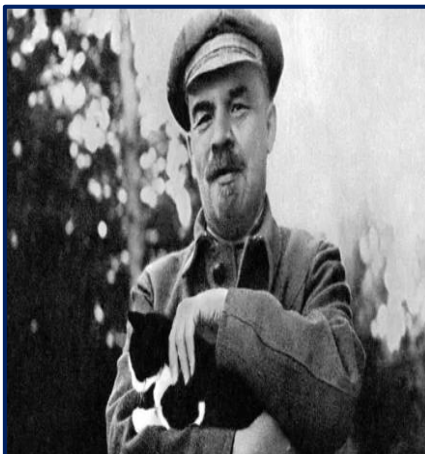
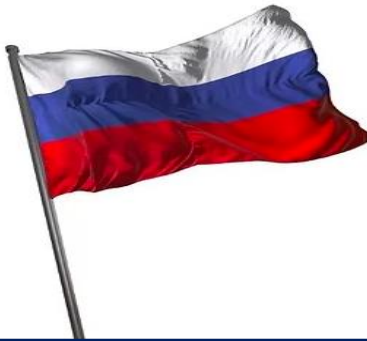
**Introduction:**

In this chapter, we will study how the world transforms from a unipolar system to a multi-polar system and also discuss the conflict between the USSR and USA. The Socialist Revolution in Russia in 1917 gave birth to the Soviet Union in the spirit of socialism, with minimum living standards for all its citizens and state-subsidized basic needs and productive assets under state ownership and control. Of the fifteen republics, Russia is the only republic that dominates everything and people in the region. The Soviet Union lagged behind the West in technology and infrastructure and failed to meet the political aspirations of the people. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 also weakened the system. Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, initiated policies of economic and political reform in 1985 to democratize the system, which was opposed by Communist Party leaders and the general public. The people of the Republic are fed up with the old-fashioned rule of the Soviet Union and in December 1991 Russia, Ukraine and the Baltic states declared independence under the leadership of Boris Yeltsin (elected leader). The formation of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) came as a surprise and resolved to exclude these states from being founding members of the CIS.

The model of transition from an authoritarian socialist system to a democratic capitalist system in Russia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe under the influence of the World Bank and the IMF has been called 'shock therapy'. India maintained good relations with all post-communist countries. India's strong relationship is still with Russia. India-Russia relations are an important aspect of Indian foreign policy. The two countries share a vision of a multi-polar world order.

**END OF BIPOLARITY**

NOTES BASED ON NCERT for CBSE EXAMS

**DO YOU KNOW?**

"Vladimir Lenin" was the leader of the Bolsheviks. In the early 20th centuries, Vladimir Lenin left Russia to Western Europe to avoid arrest by the Tsarist regime but maintained contact with other Bolsheviks.

The Russian Revolution of 1917 was actually two revolutions. The first revolution in February overthrew the imperial government in the 1905. The second revolution in October placed the Bolsheviks in power in the year of 1917.

## 1. What was the soviet system?

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics or the USSR came into being after the socialist revolution in Russia in 1917. The revolution was inspired by the ideals of 'socialism', as 'opposed to capitalism', and the need for an egalitarian society. This was perhaps the biggest attempt in human history to abolish the institution of private property and consciously design a society based on principles of equality. The makers of the Soviet system gave primacy to the state and the institution of the party. The Soviet political system centred around the communist party, and no other political party or opposition was allowed and the economy was planned and controlled by the state.

After the Second World War, the east European countries that the Soviet army had liberated from the fascist forces came under the control of the USSR. The political and the economic systems of all these countries were modelled after the USSR. This group of countries was called the 'Second World' or the 'socialist bloc'. The Warsaw Pact, a military alliance, held them together. The USSR was the leader of the socialist bloc. The Soviet Union became a great power after the Second World War. The Soviet economy was then more developed than the rest of the world except for the US. It had a complex communications network, vast energy resources including oil, iron and steel, machinery production, and a transport sector that connected its remotest areas with efficiency. It had a domestic consumer industry that produced everything from pins to cars, though their quality did not match that of the Western capitalist countries.

The Soviet state ensured a minimum standard of living for all citizens, and the government subsidised basic necessities including 'health', 'education', 'childcare' and other welfare schemes. There was no unemployment. State ownership was the dominant form of ownership and land as well as productive assets were owned and controlled by the Soviet state.

The Soviet system became very bureaucratic and the government converted into authoritarianism, these results made life very difficult for its citizens. Lack of democracy and the absence of freedom of speech stifled people who often expressed their dissent in jokes and cartoons.

In the arms race, the Soviet Union managed to match the US from time to time, but at great cost. The Soviet Union lagged behind the West in technology, infrastructure like transport, power, and most importantly, in fulfilling the political or economic aspirations of citizens. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 weakened the system even further. Though wages continued to grow, productivity and technology fell considerably behind that of the West. This led to shortages in all consumer goods. Food imports increased every year. The Soviet economy was faltering in the late 1970s and became stagnant.

- The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) came into existence in 1917 after the Socialist Revolution in Russia. The revolution was inspired by the ideals of socialism and the need for an egalitarian society as opposed to capitalism.
- After World War II, the Eastern European countries liberated from fascist forces by Soviet forces came under the control of the USSR.
- Changes have taken place in the economic and political system of the USSR. Then the Soviet economy was more developed than the rest of the world except America.
- However, the Soviet system became very bureaucratic and authoritarian. It has made life very difficult for its citizens.
- The Soviet Union was always able to compete with the US in the arms race, but it had to pay a heavy price.



### Activity

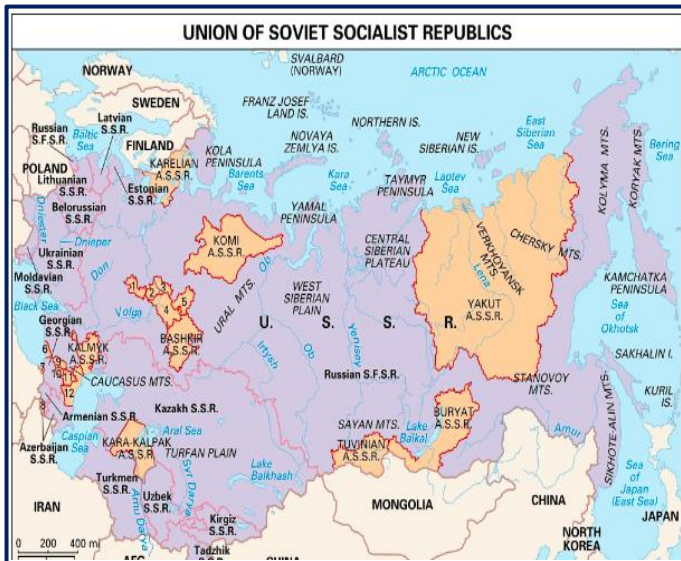
- Q1. Write a difference between the idea of Socialism and Capitalism?
- Q2. Make a short note on the concept of bipolarity?
- Q3. See the political world map and find out the western alliance countries?



## 2. The Mikhail Gorbachev and the Disintegration of USSR



## 3. Why did the Soviet Union Disintegrate?



### How did the second most powerful country in the world suddenly disintegrate?

The Soviet Union disintegrated in 1991 and the end of communism. While there are unique features of the Soviet collapse, there may be more general lessons to be drawn from this very important case. There is no doubt that the internal weaknesses of Soviet political and economic institutions, which failed to meet the aspirations of the people, were responsible for the collapse of the system.

The Economic stagnation in the USSR for many years led to severe consumer shortages and a large section of Soviet society began to doubt and question the system and to do so openly. The Soviet economy used much of its resources in maintaining a nuclear and military arsenal and the development of its satellite states in Eastern Europe and within the Soviet system. The ordinary citizens became more knowledgeable about the growth of the economic advance in the West. They could see the disparities between the soviet system and the systems of the West. After years of being told that the Soviet system was better than "Western capitalism", the reality of its backwardness came as a political and psychological shock.

The Soviet Union had become stagnant in an 'administrative' and 'political' sense as well. The Communist Party that had ruled the Soviet Union for over very long years but the Soviet Union government was not accountable to the people. Ordinary citizens were alienated by slow and 'rigid administration' as well as 'rampant corruption' and the Soviet Union government was unable to correct the system and their mistakes. People of the Soviet Union did not identify with the system and the reforms had been

promised by Mikhail Gorbachev to deal with these problems and also promised to reform the economy.

Members of the Communist Party and those who were served by the Soviet system took exactly the opposite view. They felt that their power and privileges were eroding and leader Gorbachev was moving too quickly but Gorbachev lost support on all sides and divided public opinion. The rise of nationalism and the desire for sovereignty within the various soviet republics including 'Russia' and the 'Estonia', 'Latvia' and 'Lithuania' (Baltic Republics), Ukraine, 'Georgia', and others proved to be the final and most immediate cause for the disintegration of the USSR.

Ironically, during the Cold War many thought that nationalist unrest would be strongest in the Central Asian republics given their ethnic and religious differences with the rest of the Soviet Union and their economic backwardness. The nationalist dissatisfaction with the Soviet Union was strongest in the more "European countries" and prosperous regions like 'Russia' and 'the Baltic region' as well as 'Ukraine' and 'Georgia'.

### Activity

- Q1. Make a list of Baltic countries?
- Q2. What was the main reasons for disintegration of USSR?
- Q3. See the Political world map and find out the Baltic countries?

## 4. Consequences of disintegration



The collapse of the second world or Soviet Bloc and the socialist systems in eastern Europe had profound consequences for world politics. There were three broad kinds of enduring changes that resulted from it. The First changes meant the end of Cold War confrontations. The ideological dispute over whether the 'socialist system' would beat the 'capitalist system' but it was not an issue any more. Since this dispute had engaged the military of the two blocs ( Socialist Bloc and Capitalist Bloc), had triggered a massive arms race and accumulation of nuclear weapons, and had led to the existence of military blocs, the end of the confrontation demanded an end to this arms race and a possible new peace.

Second, the power relations in world politics changed and the relative influence of ideas and institutions also changed. The end of the Cold War left open only two possibilities that were either the remaining superpower would dominate and create a 'unipolar system' or different countries or groups of countries could become important players in the international system, that was bringing in a multipolar system where no one power could dominate. On other ways, the US became the sole superpower



and the capitalist economy was now the dominant economic system on the international level and backed by the power and prestige of the US and Institutions like the 'World Bank' and 'International Monetary Fund' became powerful advisors to all these countries since they gave them loans for their transitions to capitalism. Politically, the notion of liberal democracy emerged as the best way to organise political life.

Third, the disintegration of the USSR or Soviet bloc meant the birth of many new small countries in the eastern Europe and in Central Asia. All these countries had their own independent rules and laws. Some of them in the eastern European countries, especially the Baltic regional countries and east European countries who wanted to join the new organisation like the European Union and also interested in becoming a part of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) that was led by the United States of America and the Central Asian countries wanted ties with Russia and also to establish ties with the West, the US, China and others because of their geographical location and continue their close.

## **5. Shock therapy in post-communist regimes:**

The collapse of communism was followed in most of these countries by a painful process of transformation from an 'authoritarian socialist system' to a 'democratic capitalist system'. The model of transformation in the soviet countries like 'Russia', 'Central Asian countries' and 'east European countries' that was influenced by the international organisation like World Bank and the International Monetary Forum came to be known as 'shock therapy'.

Shock therapy varied in form of intensity and speed amongst those countries who were in the second world countries, but the direction and features of the shock therapy were quite similar. Second world countries were necessarily required to make a total shift toward the capitalist economy which meant rooting out completely any structures that had developed during the Soviet period.

Private ownership was the dominant in the ownership of property and assets which belong to the state or government became privatised and corporate ownership patterns were also brought in. The collective farms were to be converted to private farming and the capitalist system was brought in the agriculture field. This transformation ruled out any alternate or 'third way' other than state-controlled 'socialism' or 'capitalism'. Shock therapy also involved a drastic change in the external orientation of these economies in the countries and development was now presumed through more trade toward the world on the concept of free trade.

The free trade concept and foreign direct investment were to be the main engines of change. This is tended towards openness to foreign investment, financial opening up or deregulation of the economies in the countries, and currency convertibility. The Western capitalist states now became the leaders and thus guided and controlled the development of the region through various agencies and organisations.



## **6. Consequences of Shock therapy**

- Shock therapy devastated the economy and wreaked havoc on people across the region.
- The value of the Russian currency 'ruble' has depreciated dramatically. People have lost their savings due to high inflation.
- The government withdrew subsidies to push large sections of the population into poverty. Middle-class society was pushed to the margins.
- Building democratic institutions has not been given the same attention and priority as the demands for economic change.
- Most of these economies, especially Russia, began to recover in 2000, 10 years after independence. The reason for the recovery is the export of natural resources such as oil, natural gas and minerals.

The shock therapy administered in the 1990s did not lead the people into the promised ideal world of mass consumption and it brought devastation to the economies and converted in the form of disaster upon the people of this region.

In Russia, the large state-controlled industrial complex almost collapsed, as about 90% of its industries were put up for sale to

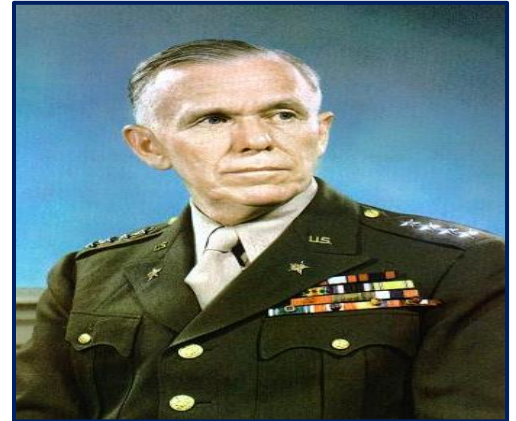
private individuals and companies. Since the restructuring was carried out through market forces and not by government-directed industrial policies, it led to the virtual disappearance of entire industries. This was called 'the largest garage sale in history', as valuable industries were undervalued and sold at throwaway prices. The value of the ruble, the Russian currency, declined dramatically.

The old trading structure of the second world broke down and the old system of social welfare was systematically destroyed and it pushed large sections of the people into poverty and the concept of privatisation led to new disparities among the societies in these countries. The constitutions of all these countries were drafted as fast as possible and Russia had a strong executive president with the widest possible powers that rendered elected parliaments relatively weak.

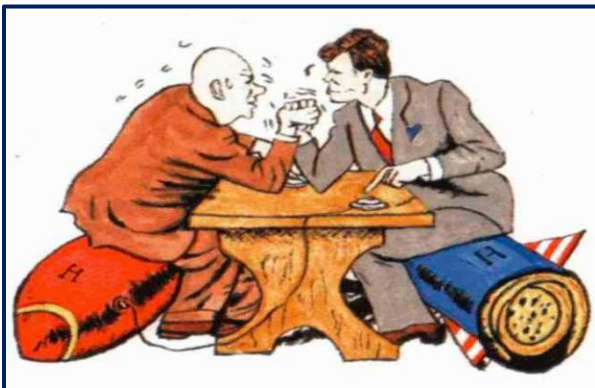
The reason for the revival for most of their economies was the export of natural resources like oil, natural gas and minerals. Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Russia, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are major oil and gas producers. Other countries have gained because of the oil pipelines that cross their territories for which they get rent and some amount of manufacturing has restarted in these countries.

#### DO YOU KNOW?

"George Marshall" was US secretary of state, unveiled the new program for Europe in the 1947 was called European Recovery Programme(ERP) or 'Marshall Plan'. This programme was offered economic and financial help for Europe and objectives of the European Recovering programme was promote the economic extension of the Truman Doctrine.



#### Tensions and conflicts:



Most of the former Soviet Republics are prone to ethnic and some other conflicts and it resulted in the form of civil wars and insurgencies. The two republics in Russia like "Chechnya " and "Dagestan " have had violent separatist movements. The Russian method of dealing with theses rebels in this region and large military bombings have led to many human rights violations but failed to deter the aspirations for independence.

In Central Asia, countries like Tajikistan had witnessed a civil war for ten years till 2001. The region as a whole has many sectarian conflicts and also some local Armenians want to secede and join Armenia in the Nagorno-Karabakh in the province of Azerbaijan. In Georgia, the demand for independence has come from two provinces, resulting in a civil war.

There are movements against the existing regimes in Ukraine, Kyrgyzstan and Georgia.

The Central Asian Republics are areas with vast hydrocarbon resources, which have brought them economic benefit. Central Asia has also become a zone of competition between outside powers and oil companies. The region is next to Russia, China, Afghanistan, and Pakistan, and close to West Asia.

The United States of America wanted military bases in the region and paid the governments of all Central Asian states to hire bases and to allow airplanes to fly over their territory during the wars with Afghanistan and Iraq after the terror attack on the September, 11th 2001.

China has interests here because of the oil resources, and the Chinese have begun to settle around the borders and conduct trade. In eastern Europe, Czechoslovakia split peacefully into two, with the Czechs and the Slovaks forming independent countries and the most severe conflict took place in the Balkan republics of Yugoslavia. It broke apart with several provinces like Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina declaring independence after 1991 but ethnic Serbs opposed this and it resulted in the form of massacre of non-Serb Bosnians and the bombing of Yugoslavia followed the inter-ethnic civil war after the NATO intervention.



## 7. India and post-communist countries:

India has maintained good relations with all the post-communist countries because of their good foreign policy but the strongest relations are still those between Russia and India. The relations of India with Russia are a very important aspect of India's foreign policy. Indo-Russian relations are the co-existence of several powers in the international system, collective security, greater regionalism, negotiated settlements of international conflicts, an independent foreign policy for all countries, and decision making through bodies like the UN that should be strengthened, democratized, and empowered.

India stands to benefit from its relationship with Russia on issues like Kashmir, energy supplies, sharing information on international terrorism, access to Central Asia, and balancing its relations with China. Russia stands to benefit from this relationship because India is the second largest arms market for Russia. The Indian military gets most of its hardware from Russia. Since India is an oil importing nation, Russia is important to India and has repeatedly come to the assistance of India during its oil crises. India is seeking to increase its energy imports from Russia and the republics of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. Cooperation with these republics includes partnership and investment in oilfields. Russia is important for India's nuclear energy plans and assisted India's space industry by giving, for example, the cryogenic rocket when India needed it. Russia and India have collaborated on various scientific projects.

Due to the dissolution of the Soviet Union: There were many reasons for the collapse of the Soviet Union. They are the internal weaknesses of Soviet political and economic institutions that failed to live up to the aspirations of the people.

The Soviet Union was also stagnant due to rampant corruption, a reluctance to allow much publicity in government, and a concentration of power over vast territory.

A section of society is not happy with Gorbachev's reforms. The reforms initiated by Gorbachev are believed to have been very slow. Another reason for the collapse of the USSR was the rise of nationalism and the desire for sovereignty in various republics, including Russia and the Baltic republics.

Consequences of cancellation: The break-up of the USSR had many consequences. They are as follows:

This put an end to the Cold War controversy. There is no contradiction between socialist ideology and capitalist ideology. Power relations in world politics have changed and so has the relative influence of ideas and institutions. The US became the only superpower to support the capitalist economy, which became an internationally dominant economy. The end of the Soviet Union paved the way for the emergence of many new nations. All these countries have their own independent aspirations and choices.

### Shock therapy in post-communist rule:

The model of transition from an authoritarian socialist system to a democratic capitalist system in Russia, Central Asia and Eastern Europe under the influence of the World Bank and the IMF has been called 'shock therapy'. This process of transformation led to the downfall of Communism.

Results of shock therapy:- Shock therapy devastated the economy and wreaked havoc on people across the region. The value of the Russian currency 'ruble' has depreciated dramatically. People have lost their savings due to high inflation. The government withdrew subsidies to push large sections of the population into poverty. Middle-class society was pushed to the margins. Tensions and conflicts in the former Soviet republics:-

There were tensions and conflicts in many former Soviet republics and many civil wars and uprisings.

In Russia, violent separatist movements took place in two republics, Chechnya and Dagestan. Tajikistan suffered a civil war for almost 10 years until 2001. There are many religious conflicts in this area.





The competition zone will be between Central Asian external powers and oil companies. Czechoslovakia was divided into two parts, the Czechs and Slovakia becoming independent states. Yugoslavia, along with several provinces such as Croatia, Slovenia and Bosnia and Herzegovina, split and declared independence.

India and post-communist countries:-

India maintained good relations with all post-communist countries. India's strong relationship is still with Russia. India-Russia relations are an important aspect of Indian foreign policy. The two countries share a vision of a multi-polar world order.

#### DO YOU KNOW?

“Nikita Khrushchev” was leader of the Soviet Union during the year of 1953-64 denounced Stalin’s leadership style and introduced some reforms in 1956; suggested “peaceful coexistence” with the West; involved in suppressing popular rebellion in Hungary and in the Cuban missile crisis.

#### Activity

- Q1. Make a short note on the India’s relation with communist world?
- Q2. See the political world map and find out the communist countries around the world?
- Q3. Why liberal democracy different from socialism?

#### SUMMARY

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) came into existence in 1917 after the Socialist Revolution in Russia. The revolution was inspired by the ideals of socialism and the need for an egalitarian society as opposed to capitalism. After World War II, the Eastern European countries liberated from fascist forces by Soviet forces came under the control of the USSR. However, the Soviet system became very bureaucratic and authoritarian. It has made life very difficult for its citizens. The Soviet Union was always able to compete with the US in the arms race, but it had to pay a heavy price.

In 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev, General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, called for reform of the system. He introduced the economic and political reform policies of Perestroika (reconstruction) and Glasnost (opening). However, his policies were later criticized. In 1991 there was a coup promoted by the draftsmen of the Communist Party. The Communist Party did not want old-fashioned rule, the people wanted independence. Russia, Ukraine and Belarus, the three major republics of the USSR, declared the dissolution of the Soviet Union in December 1991. Capitalism and democracy were adopted as the basis for the post-Soviet republics.



## Questions For Practice

1. Chechens tribe?  
(a) Buddhist group  
(b) Christian ethnic group  
(c) Jewish ethnic group  
(d) Muslim ethnic group
2. When did the Soviet Union collapse?  
(a) 1989                      (b) 1990  
(c) 1991                      (d) 1992
3. India is a country that provides assistance and technical assistance to steel mills?  
(a) United States of America.  
(b) USSR.  
(c) Russia  
(d) Japan.
4. The USSR came into existence after the Socialist Revolution in Russia in the year?  
(a) 1915.                      (b) 1916.  
(c) 1917.                      (d) 1918.
5. Who led the Russian Revolution of 1917?  
(a) Joseph Stalin.  
(b) Nikita Khrushchev.  
(c) Mikhail Gorbachev.  
(d) Vladimir Lenin.
6. Chechen tribes?  
(a) Buddhist group.  
(b) Christian ethnic group.  
(c) Jewish ethnic group.  
(d) Muslim ethnic group.
7. During the year the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan?  
(a) 1975.                      (b) 1977.  
(c) 1979.                      (d) 1981.
8. Who was the General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in 1985?  
(a) Joseph Stalin.  
(b) Nikita Khrushchev.  
(c) Mikhail Gorbachev.  
(d) Vladimir Lenin.
9. In which Central Asian country did the Civil War last for ten years?  
(a) Azerbaijan  
(b) Tajikistan  
(c) Uzbekistan  
(d) Turkmenistan
10. Founded the Bolshevik Communist Party?  
(a) Vladimir Lenin  
(b) Stalin  
(c) Nikita Khrushchev  
(d) Leonid Brezhnev
11. Which of the following statements about the nature of the Soviet economy is incorrect?  
(a) The dominant ideology of socialism  
(b) There is state ownership / control over the factors of production  
(c) People enjoyed financial freedom  
(d) Every aspect of the economy is planned and controlled by the state
12. Which of the following is not an evolution of the USSR disintegration?  
(a) U.S. And the end of the ideological war between the USSR  
(b) War begun between USSR & US  
(c) A change in the energy balance in the world order  
(d) Crisis in the Middle East.
13. Which was the first Soviet republic to declare independence from Soviet Russia?  
(a) Lithuania.              (b) Moldova  
(c) Armenia                  (d) Georgia
14. The Bolshevik Communist Party was founded?  
(a) Vladimir Lenin.  
(b) Stalin.  
(c) Nikita Khrushchev.  
(d) Leonid Brezhnev.
15. The most serious conflicts in the Balkans took place?  
(a) Bulgaria                  (b) Greece  
(c) Yugoslavia                (d) Macedonia
16. The most serious conflicts in the Balkans took place?  
(a) Bulgaria                  (b) Greece  
(c) Yugoslavia                (d) Macedonia
17. The Berlin Wall fell?  
(a) November 1989  
(b) December 1989  
(c) January 1990  
(d) February 1990
18. In which year did Gorbachev become General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union?  
(a) 1989                      (b) 1990  
(c) 1987                      (d) 1985
19. Russia U.S.S.R. Signed the U.N. in the occupied seat?  
(a) December 1991  
(b) November 1989  
(c) December 1990  
(d) October 1992.
20. Which of the following was not preferred by the makers of the Soviet system?  
(a) Termination of private property  
(b) A society based on the principle of equality  
(c) No opposition party shall be allowed  
(d) There is no state control over the economy
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27. When did the Soviet Union collapse?  
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30. Who led the Russian Revolution of 1917?  
 (a) Joseph Stalin  
 (b) Nikita Khrushchev  
 (c) Mikhail Gorbachev  
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 (b) Nikita Khrushchev  
 (c) Mikhail Gorbachev  
 (d) Vladimir Ilyich Lenin

## Solutions

1. (d)	5. (d)	9. (b)	13. (a)	17. (a)	21. (c)	25. (d)	29. (a)	33. (c)	37. (c)
2. (c)	6. (d)	10. (a)	14. (a)	18. (d)	22. (b)	26. (b)	30. (d)	34. (d)	38. (a)
3. (b)	7. (c)	11. (c)	15. (c)	19. (a)	23. (c)	27. (c)	31. (c)	35. (a)	39. (a)
4. (c)	8. (b)	12. (d)	16. (c)	20. (d)	24. (a)	28. (a)	32. (b)	36. (b)	40. (d)

