













Lesson 17 (MW 5.17)









World War II devastated the Soviet Union.



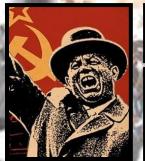


To create a new industrial base, Joseph Stalin returned to the method that he had used in the 1930s.













Soviet workers were expected to produce goods for export with little in return for themselves.

The incoming capital from abroad could then be used to buy machinery and Western technology.









Despite all of that, economic recovery in the Soviet Union was spectacular in some respects.



Impressively, by 1950, Russian industrial production surpassed pre-war levels by 40%.













New power plants, canals, and giant factories were built.

Heavy industry increased, chiefly for military benefit.





The hydrogen bomb in 1953 and the first space satellite, Sputnik I, in 1957 enhanced the Soviet Unions reputation as a world power.











Yet, the Soviet people were shortchanged.





The production of consumer goods did not increase as much as heavy industry, and there was a housing shortage.













As a British official in Moscow reported, "Every room is both a living room by day and a bedroom by night."

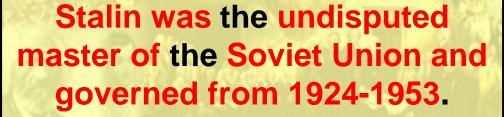






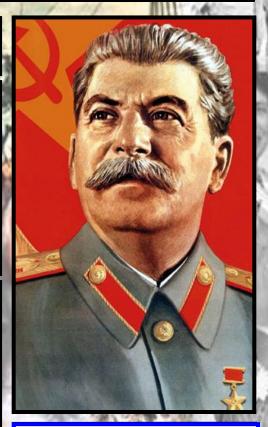








He distrusted competitors, exercised sole power, and had little respect for other Communist Party leaders.









STALIN ERA:



He is reported to have said to members of his inner circle in 1952, "You are as blind as kittens. What would you do without me?"









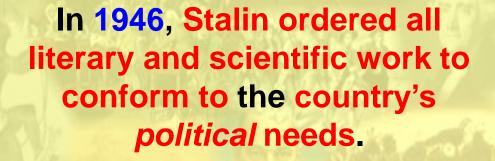




STALIN ERA:

Stalin's suspicions added to the regime's increasing repression.









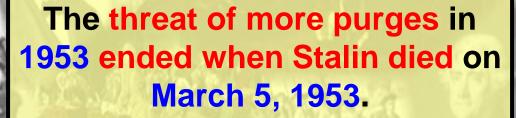






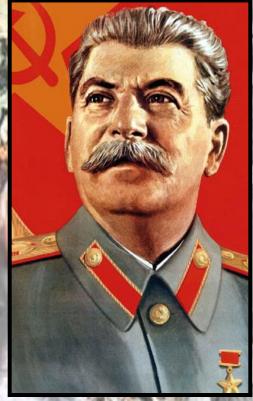






deaths of 23 million people.





















A group of leaders succeeded Stalin, but the new General Secretary of the Communist Party, Nikita Khrushchev, soon emerged as the chief Soviet policy maker and governed from 1953-1964.











Khrushchev took steps to undo some of the worst features of Stalin's regime.





At the 20th Congress of the Communist Party in 1956, Khrushchev condemned Stalin for his "administrative violence, mass repression, and terror."











The process of eliminating the more ruthless policies of Stalin became known as "de-Stalinization".





Additionally, Khrushchev loosened government controls on literary and artistic works.









In 1962, for example, he allowed the publication of *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich*.





This novel, written by Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn, is a grim portrayal of life in a Siberian labor camp.











Many Soviets identified with Ivan as a symbol of the suffering endured under Stalin.



Khrushchev also tried to place more emphasis on producing consumer goods.









He attempted to increase agricultural output by growing corn and cultivating vast lands east of the Ural Mountains.



The attempt was unsuccessful and damaged Khrushchev's reputation within the party.















This failure, combined with increased military spending, hurt the Soviet economy.

The industrial growth rate, which had soared in the early 1950s, now declined sharply from 13% in 1953 to 7.5% in 1964.











Foreign policy failures also damaged Khrushchev's reputation among his colleagues.





His rash plan to place missiles in Cuba (and the Soviet Union's perceived "defeat" during the Cuban Missile Crisis) was the final straw.







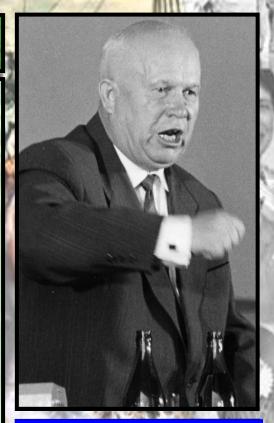








While he was away on vacation in 1964, a special meeting of the Soviet leaders voted him out of office (because of "deteriorating health") and forced him into retirement.







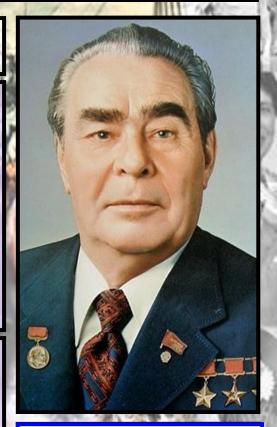




When Nikita Khrushchev was removed from office in 1964, two men, Alexei Kosygin and Leonid Brezhnev replaced him.



Brezhnev emerged as the dominant leader in the 1970s and governed from 1964-1982.











He was determined to keep Eastern Europe in communist hands and was not interested in reform.





His Brezhnev Doctrine established that the Soviets had the right to intervene if communism was threatened in another communist country.















At the same time, Brezhnev benefited from détente, a relaxation of tensions and improved relations between the U.S. and the Soviet Union that began under President Richard Nixon.















In the 1970s, the two superpowers signed SALT I and SALT II (Strategic Arms Limitation Treaties) and the Anti-Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty to limit nuclear weapons.











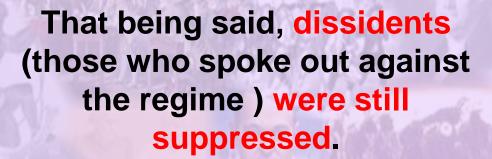








Because they felt more secure, Soviet leaders relaxed their authoritarian rule and allowed more access to Western music, dress, and art.













For example, Andrei Sakharov, father of the Soviet hydrogen bomb, was punished for defending human rights.



In his economic policies, Brezhnev continued to emphasize heavy industry.









Two problems, however, weakened the Soviet economy.





First, the government's central planning led to a huge, complex bureaucracy that discouraged efficiency and led to indifference.







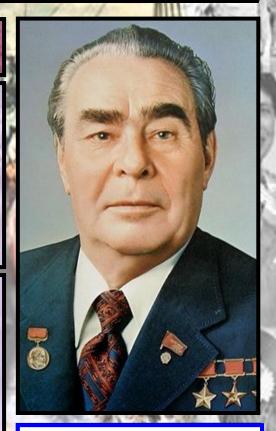




Second, collective farmers had no incentive to work hard.



Many preferred working their own small private plots to laboring in the collective work brigades.







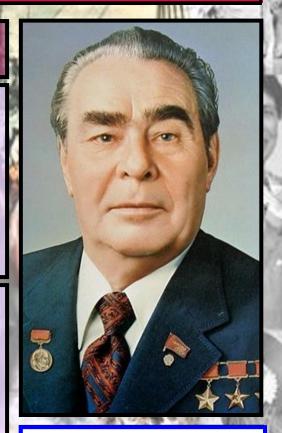


By the 1970s, the communist ruling class in the Soviet Union had become complacent and corrupt.





Party and state leaders, as well as army leaders and secret police (the notorious KGB), enjoyed a high standard of living.





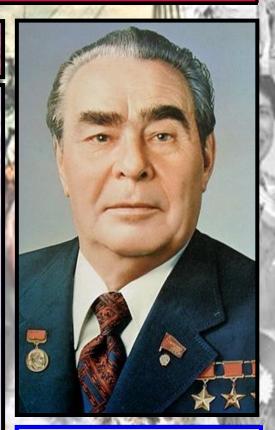








Brezhnev was unwilling to tamper with the party leadership and state bureaucracy regardless of the inefficiency and corruption that the system encouraged.











By the 1970s, détente had allowed U.S. grain and consumer goods to be sold to the Soviet Union.





However, détente collapsed in 1979 when the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. A new period of East-West confrontation began.









The Soviet Union wanted to restore a pro-Soviet regime in Afghanistan.



The U.S. viewed this as an "invasion".



The Soviets called it an "intervention", and justified it through the Brezhnev Doctrine.











To show his disapproval,
President Jimmy Carter
canceled U.S. participation in
the 1980 Olympic Games to be
held in Moscow.



Carter also placed an embargo on the shipment of U.S. grain to the Soviets.







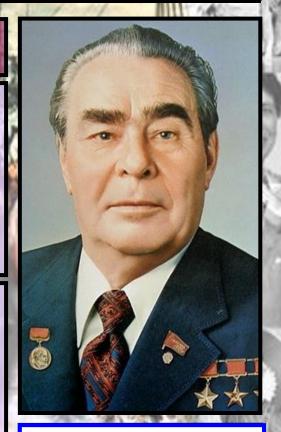


Relations became even chillier when Ronald Reagan became U.S. President.





Calling the Soviet Union an "Evil Empire", Reagan began a U.S. military buildup and a new arms race.







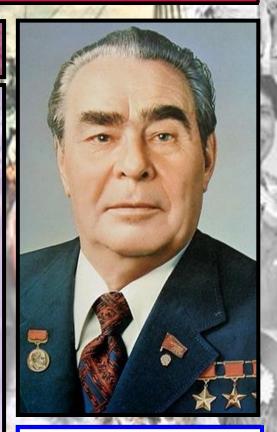








Reagan also gave military aid to the Afghan rebels to maintain a war in Afghanistan that the Soviet Union could not win (in what became the "Soviet Vietnam").









QUESTION



1. Summarize Stalin's rule by discussing how the Soviet people fared, how the economy did, what happened with the military, and the perception of the Soviet Union worldwide.







QUESTION



2. Summarize Khrushchev's rule by discussing how the Soviet people fared, how the economy did, what happened with the military, and the perception of the Soviet Union worldwide.







QUESTION 3



3. Summarize Brezhnev's rule by discussing how the Soviet people fared, how the economy did, what happened with the military, and the perception of the Soviet Union worldwide.







QUESTION



4. What similarities were there between the Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev governments?







QUESTION 5



5. What differences were there between the Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev governments?







