

SSWH21: EXAMINE CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN THE WORLD SINCE THE 1960S



Stamp from USSR supporting perestroika and other reforms. Text on the right reads "Acceleration, democracy, freedom of speech," 1988



ELEMENT B: DESCRIBE THE REFORMS OF KHRUSHCHEV AND AND THE BREAKUP OF THE SOVIET UNION IN 1991 THAT PRODUCED INDEPENDENT COUNTRIES

Khrushchev's Reforms



- When Nikita Khrushchev came to power in 1958 he embarked on a policy of de-Stalinization. He criticized and made Stalin's crimes known.
 - He eased censorship, softened restrictions on artists and intellectuals, freed political prisoners, and ended the secret police's fear tactics.
 - He also enacted economic reforms that gave more control to local communities and tried to refocus the economy to create more consumer goods.





Gorbachev's Reforms

- ❑ Mikhail Gorbachev took power in 1985 and issued broad reforms in the Soviet Union that then got away from him.
 - His reform efforts were two-pronged:
 1. Glasnost referred to “openness.” It ended censorship and allowed people to openly discuss problems in the Union and with the Communists.
 2. Perestroika, meaning “restructuring,” aimed to remake the government and the economy to allow for more efficiency and more productivity. He worked to streamline bureaucracy and allowed for limited private enterprise.
 - These changes resulted in economic turmoil, food shortages, and high prices. The reforms also opened the way for political unrest as dissidents were allowed to have a voice.
 - Eastern European countries, seeing the Soviet’s weakness, declared independence, and nationalism rose throughout the Soviet Union. Gorbachev was unable to hold them all together.
 - A coup by hardline communists against Gorbachev in 1991 failed, but it severely weakened his ability to govern and maintain the Soviet Union. He resigned later in the year, ending the Soviet Union. As the Soviet Union fell apart, the remaining republics each declared their independence.

