#Reach for the Stars

YTUMUN 2025
JCC STUDY GUIDE

Agenda Item:
USSR, Gorbachev's Perestroika

Board Members

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YTUMUN

1. Letter from the Secretary-General

2. Letter from the Co-Heads of Crisis

Distinguished Delegates,

It is with great pleasure that we welcome you to the 2025 edition of the Yıldız Technical University Model United Nations Conference (YTUMUN2025), where we will be hosting you in the two crisis committees of HCC: The Taiping Rebellion and JCC: Gorbachev's Perestroika. We are your Co-Heads of Crisis, Eylül Ece Pazarözyurt and Ege Kaval, the individuals who will primarily be focusing on making both committees proceed in a fashion that both entertains and educates you.

Over the course of three days, we look forward to witnessing your intense debates, spanning from freeing the Chinese from the tyranny of the Qing Dynasty while following your holy leader, Hong Xiuquan, all the way to one cabinet attempting to bring the Soviet Union to the New Age, while the other side believes the motherland doesn't need to change to succeed. Our primary objective is to make these simulations feel as immersive and enjoyable as possible, while also giving you insight into both of these historical moments.

Attached to this letter is a study guide prepared to support your initial research and preparation for your respective committee. We would like to suggest that you go beyond the guide to both ensure your readiness for the proceedings and to broaden your horizons.

Before concluding our letter, we would like to extend our sincere thanks to every member of our Executive and Organizational Team for their tireless efforts in preparing the framework for these committees to become a reality. Special thanks go to our Executive Trainee, İstemihan Gökay Tatar, for his academic efforts in the preparation of this study guide in particular.

If you have any questions or need assistance in regards to the committees, please don't hesitate to contact us. We are excited to see your diplomatic skills in action during the conference.

Best Regards,

Co-Heads of Crisis YTUMUN25

3. Introduction to the Committee

Privyet, delegates, and welcome to the study guide of the Joint Crisis Committee(JCC): Gorbachev's Perestroika. Within this committee's procedure, you will be divided into two cabinets: The Reformists and the Conservatives, both of which will have their own end goals for the committee. This academic document will provide you with the historical background necessary for you to not get lost during the proceedings; however, to repeat what is written within the welcoming letter from our Co-Heads of Crisis, you are advised to go beyond the guide to gain even more knowledge on the topic at hand. Alongside the historical background, you will be provided with some base knowledge on crisis committee procedure, expectations for the committee, and much more.

The first major topic that will be covered is what crisis committees are, which are a dynamic, simulation-based, usually historical event recreation, where delegates are expected to tackle issues in a rapid and direct fashion. This particular committee will be a JCC, meaning there will be two cabinets battling it out on the political field to impose their ideals on the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR). Keeping the debates and procedure realistic as well as continuous is the Crisis Team, a group of crisis-experienced individuals who will be in charge of the updates that will be presented to both cabinets. Delegates will write directives, which are written documents sent by members of both cabinets to the Crisis Team for evaluation and response. These documents, after being read with meticulous care, will have results and consequences, which will be relayed to the respective cabinets in the form of updates. The
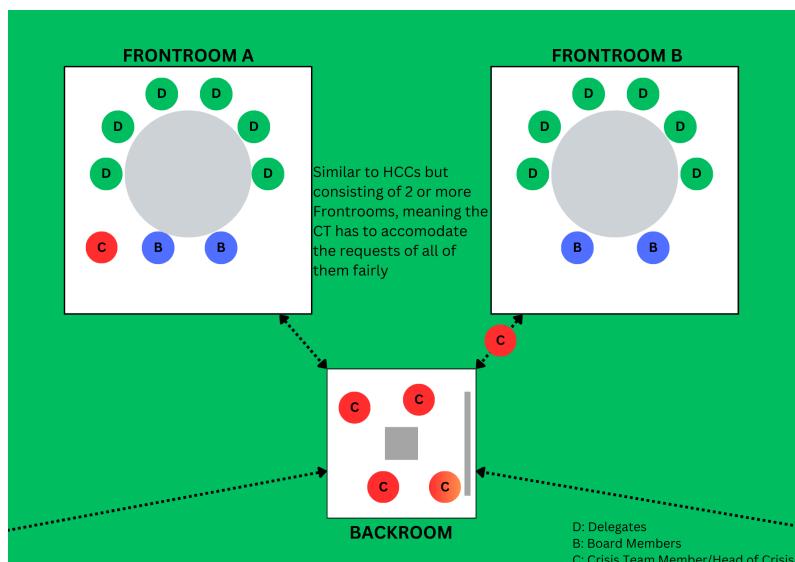
updates will shape the proceedings, as they will inform you on how you have shaped the future of the USSR, for better or for worse. If these terms are new to you, then don't be intimidated by them because in the first session of the conference, we will be conducting a Crisis 101 workshop to help you better understand everything.

As for the historical context of the committee, as mentioned multiple times before, we will be simulating the administrative people of the USSR on the tail end of the Soviet Union. After years of spending enormous amounts of money on causes not so beneficial for the people, the USSR was slowly but surely falling into disarray. By the middle of the 1980s, the country was riddled with economic issues as well as political incompetence, so in an attempt to fix this situation, Mikhail Gorbachev, the Communist Party's General Secretary, began implementing multiple reforms, like Perestroika, the political movement aiming to restructure the political economy of the Soviet Union, and Glasnost, its policy referring to political transparency and openness. These terms and what their consequences were will be delved deeper into in this guide; however, the main fact delegates must understand is these reforms would, of course, face opposition in the form of Soviet loyalists. With the mention of this fact, delegates can understand the reasoning behind the form of the two cabinets, one attempting to enforce these reforms and one attempting to stop them, namely the Reformists and Conservatives.

4. Historical Background

4.1. 1980-1985 USSR

4.1.1. Brezhnev and the Economic Downfall

Leonid Brezhnev was the General Secretary of the USSR and was mostly synonymous with the economic downfall of the Soviet Union. Brezhnev's policies were ultimately devastating to the nation's economy. One such example is Brezhnev's obsession with military investments. The excessive expenditures made into the military were a majority of the USSR's GDP. Another case that was damaging to the economy was Brezhnev's opposition to the 1965 economic reforms. Brezhnev saw these reforms as a threat and abandoned these policies, which ultimately contributed to the stagnation of the USSR economy. Brezhnev also implemented policies for stricter, more controlled environments both economically and politically. With all of the events

and decisions, corruption also followed suit, which further contributed to the stagnation of the USSR and thereafter came the invasion of Afghanistan, which came with detrimental outcomes.

https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/014759679090062E

Source: Maddison 2001, Orłowski 2010

* Estimated with Maddison's data
** Estimated in international prices
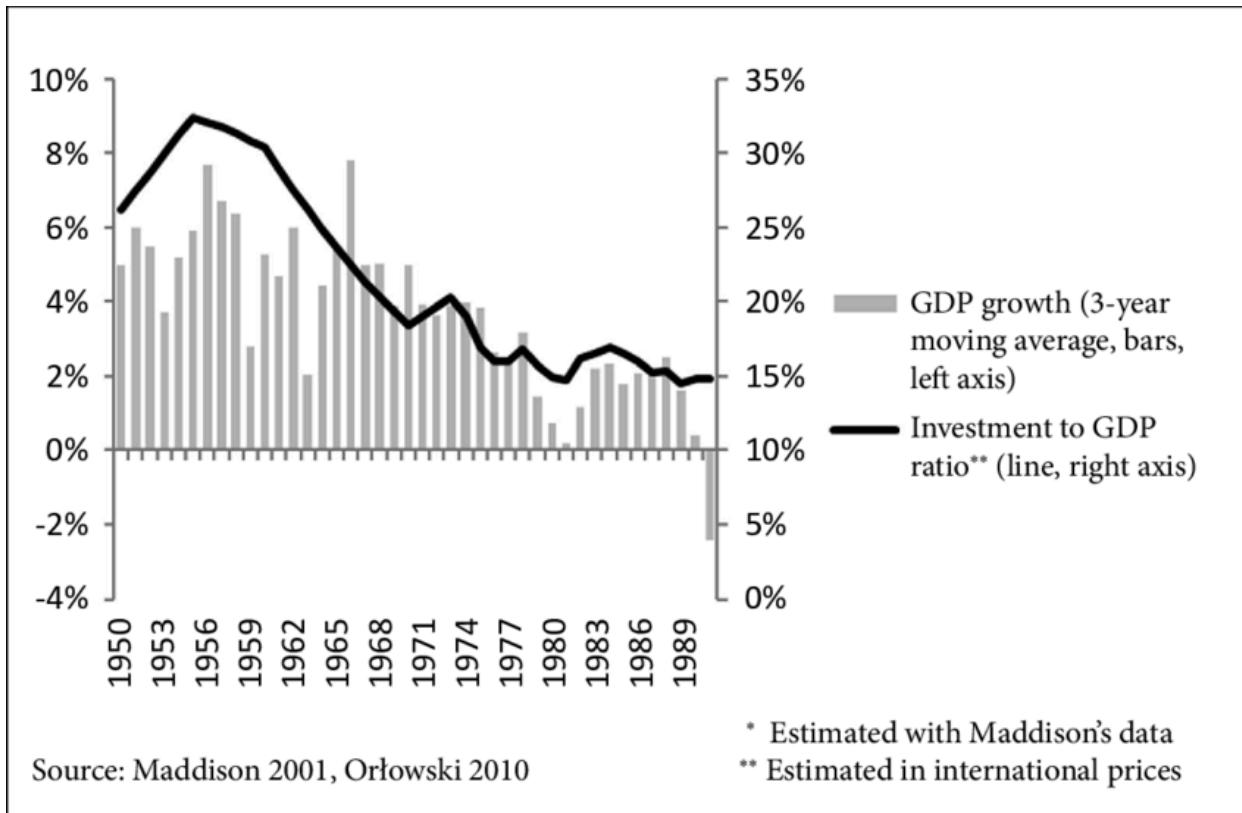
https://www.researchgate.net/figure/GDP-growth-and-actual-investment-rate-in-the-USSR-1950-1991_fig1_357560877

4.1.2. Soviet-Afghan War

With the growing chaos in Afghanistan and rejection of Soviet intervention in the landscape, Brezhnev and his allies decided to begin an invasion of the Afghan people on December 24, 1979. The USSR justified the war with its concerns about the socialist rule in Afghanistan. The main goal of the war was to assassinate Hafizullah Amin, who was the head of state, and replace him with Babrak Karmal, who was more inclined to cooperate with the regime. On 27th of December 1979, this goal was quickly achieved, but this achievement did not come close to ending the war. Babrak Karmal failed to gain significant support in the nation, and the rebellion grew. One of the most prominent groups in the resistance was the Mujahideen, which

means "doers of jihad". While the Soviets were expecting a quick ending war, this was not the case. Even though the mujahideen were not centralized in any way, they were able to fend off Soviet occupation attempts with insurgency tactics and guerrilla warfare. Even though the Soviet Union had occupied most of the major roads, the Mujahideen had control of most of the region. The mujahideen would also get support from various nations, including the United States, Pakistan, and more. These nations would also condemn the invasion that the Soviet Union was trying desperately to win. Overall, the Soviet Union's ultimately fruitless efforts to swiftly end the Afghanistan War had exposed the weakness of both the Soviet Union's current system by shattering the trust in both the credibility of the state and the high reputation of the Red Army.

4.1.3. Leadership Crisis-Andropov and Chernenko

Following the death of Brezhnev in 1982, the Soviets faced the problem of having a singular authoritative leader. The short-lived general secretaries were not enough to resolve the economic and political problems that were on the rise, and there was seemingly no one with

enough vision to combat these issues. Enter Yuri Andropov, former head of the KGB. He was widely regarded as the best-informed individual in the USSR, a feat he achieved through his previous positions of power, and he wanted to reform the country. He approached this endeavor with caution since he believed that there wasn't anything fundamentally wrong with the socialist system, and that the problems of the motherland could simply be resolved with more discipline and initiative. As General Secretary, he targeted corruption and low productivity, an approach that was strong in theory, but weak when it came to implementation. They were changes aiming to discipline the existing system rather than restructuring it, and may have perhaps worked out; however, his deteriorating health ended up taking his life in February 1984[1].

Upon his death, his seat was left to Chernenko, his polar opposite when it came to reforms. He was viewed as an old Brezhnev system guard by both the West and the Soviets. His 13-month tenure saw no major changes, as he only continued established Brezhnev-era policies, while making only slight adjustments to increasing customer goods. This rapid changing of the tides in Soviet leadership made it clear that the institution was flawed, and that the state needed a brighter, more visionary leader, focused on dynamically changing the system, paving the way to Gorbachev's eventual rise to power in March 1985.

4.1.4. Inner Struggles

4.1.4.1. Baltic States

While most states of the Soviet Union were stagnant when it came to actively defying the state, the Baltic republics, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, were constantly voicing discontent. The primary reason behind this spirit of defiance was their history rooted in independence from the USSR. In 1940, when they were first being consumed by the Union, they were resistant but ultimately fell; however, the legacy of that resistance lived on and took shape in nationalist mobilization movements during the 1980s. Specifically, under Glasnost, these movements emerged in heavy numbers, leading to the formation of Sajudis in Lithuania and the Popular Fronts in Estonia and Latvia.

With the increasing resistance proving to be effective, the primary goals of the movements evolved from simply requesting reforms from the Soviets to full political sovereignty demands. The non-violent nature of these movements put Moscow in a difficult position, and

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[1] https://www.jstor.org/stable/40395598

effectively, the Union, already under heavy pressure to keep its international image cohesive, could not manage the situation. The Baltic States were thus the first to show the implications of Gorbachev's policies on internal states[2].

4.1.4.2. Caucasus Region

While the Baltics were in unison in their resistance against the USSR, the Caucasus region, consisting of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, was quite the opposite. Riddled with ethnic conflicts and territorial disputes, this region actively tested the Soviets' ability to manage conflict. With Glasnost, the long-suppressed tension of the area resurfaced, specifically in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Where there were peaceful protests in the Baltic states, there was violence within the Caucasus Region, at such a level that it overwhelmed Soviet authorities. The crises that occurred were supposed to be in the way that the Soviets had suppressed many times over; however, the new policies that were adopted made it extremely difficult to tackle the issues in the way they were used to. These events showed how unstable and dangerous the region was once the cover of oppression was removed. Glasnost, while aiming to reform socialism, released the national and ethnic grievances that the nations had underlying, and this culmination of events only accelerated the eventual dissolution of the USSR.

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[2]https://mbeissinger.scholar.princeton.edu/sites/g/files/toruqf2826/files/mbeissinger/files/beissinger.ceh_.article.pdf

4.1.5. Foreign Relations

4.1.5.1. Able Archer '83

What was meant to be a simple NATO command-post exercise nearly turned the Cold War hot, 100 million degrees Celsius hot[3]. Able Archer 83 was conducted in November 1983, as a part of the wider NATO training cycle Autumn Forge 83, and was simply a highly realistic exercise. The Soviets, watching the activities closely, suspected there could be more that met the eye, a potential nuclear move that might be conducted against them masked as a training session. This stimulated international conflict, leading to the USSR showing signs of rapid nuclear use preparations. Western officials, particularly Lt. Gen. Leonard Perroots, a U.S. intelligence operative in Europe, attempted to clarify the situation, and eventually the situation de-escalated. U.S.-Soviet relations were strained from mutual suspicions in the years leading up to this event, so Able Archer was the point at which the Soviets truly believed what their suspicions suggested.

This event in history later became a huge case study of accidental escalation risk. The mix of preexisting paranoia and miscommunication could have created a situation from which there would be no return. Nuclear war could have erupted if the necessary steps weren't taken on time after the exercise[4].


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[3] The temperatures a nuclear explosion can reach during peak energy output (Theodore A.Postol, Possible Fatalities from Superfires Following Nuclear Attacks in or Near Urban Areas)
[4] https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-1983-military-drill-that-nearly-sparked-nuclear-war-with-the-soviets-180979980/

4.1.5.2. The Berlin Wall

The barrier that surrounded West Berlin with the purpose of preventing access from East Berlin, the Berlin Wall came to symbolise the Cold War and Germany's division. Standing tall from 1961 to 1989, the Soviets had approved the construction, and work began on August 12, 1961. The Volkspolizei and the Nationale Volksarmee (NVA) secured the sector for the building process first with the use of barbed wire and barricades, followed soon after by the concrete walls. This wall later turned into a border system, which was 155 km long, surrounding West Berlin, and was designed to be impassable, with guards stationed all around it with orders to shoot any fleers on sight[5].
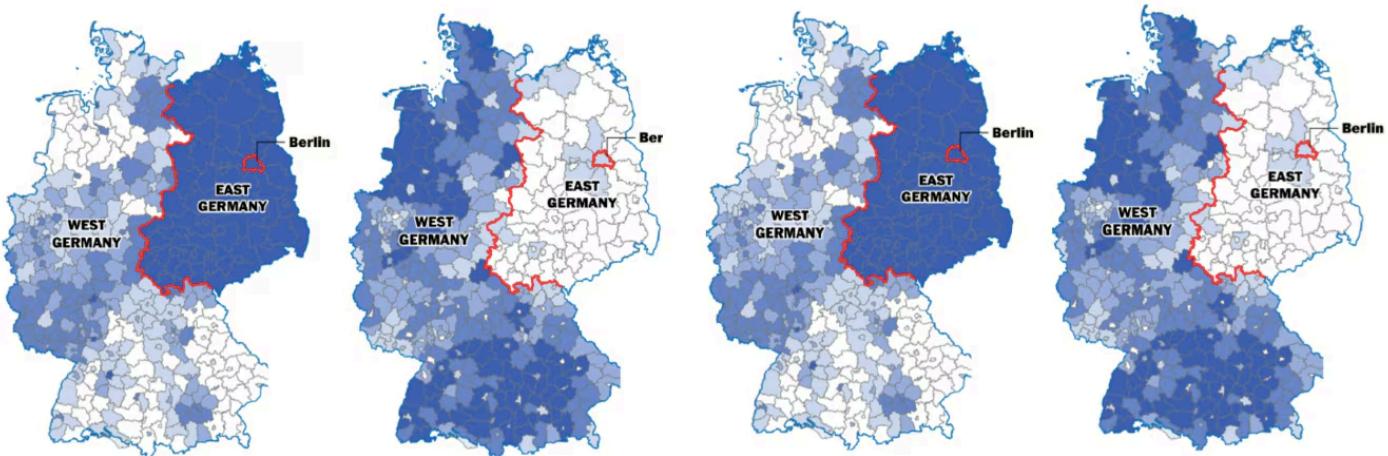
Figure showing statistics from 2011. From left to right: Unemployment rate, disposable income rate, childcare available for children aged 0-2, percentage of young people among the total population (darker tones indicating higher rates[6])

The most significant change that affected the Iron Curtain's lingering in Germany during the time of Gorbachev was in 1988, when he rejected the Brezhnev Doctrine, which had justified Soviet intervention to maintain communist governments in Eastern Europe. This change ultimately meant that Moscow could no longer intervene in Eastern Europe, sparking movements

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[5] https://www.planet-wissen.de/geschichte/deutsche_geschichte/die_berliner_mauer/index.html
[6] https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2016/10/03/germany-reunified-26-years-ago-but-some-divisions-are-still-strong/

across the region, eventually leading to the wall's collapse in 1989 and the reunification of Germany in 1990[7].

4.1.5.3. The Warsaw Pact

The Warsaw Pact, formally established with the name *Treaty of Friendship, Cooperation, and Mutual Assistance,* was the Soviets' attempt to stand in unity against NATO. While it seemingly was a defensive alliance, its primary objective was to ensure that the involved states' allegiance to the USSR. The document shaped Soviet foreign relations, specifically their intervention policies, most notably in Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968. These actions forcibly ensured unity but harmed the Soviets' international reputation, further fueling the West's fear of Soviet expansionism.
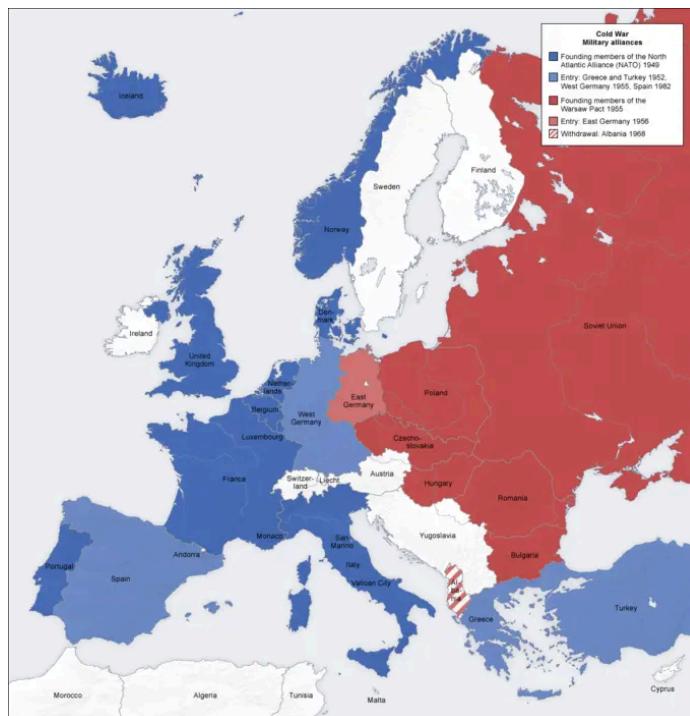
In the late 1970s, the Pact remained militarily viable; however, the political fragility started to show cracks. The rising tensions with the West were only worsened by the aforementioned Able Archer 83 incident, and with member states actively starting to voice unrest were the first signs of the Pact's fragile nature. Another previously mentioned event, namely the rejection of the Brezhnev Doctrine, was the tipping point for numerous countries. As regimes in

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[7] https://www.stiftung-berliner-mauer.de/de/themen/die-berliner-mauer

Eastern Europe began to collapse in 1989, the pact was rendered useless and was formally dissolved in 1991. This marked the end of the Cold War's bloc-based order and the dissolution of Soviet influence in Europe altogether[8].

4.1.5.4. The Disaster of Chernobyl

Perhaps the most devastating event in Soviet history, on 26th of April 1986, the No. 4 reactor of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant exploded. What was supposed to be an already belated safety test[9] turned into a catastrophe, one with a death toll that can't be calculated even to this day. The accident resulted in the most significant uncontrolled radioactive discharge into the environment ever documented for any civilian activity, with substantial amounts of radioactive substances being emitted into the atmosphere[10].

"The wind has been blowing toward Germany. They're not letting children play outside…in Frankfurt."

A chilling line from HBO's drama mini-series Chernobyl, these words are uttered by the actor who portrayed Boris Shcherbina, and are used here to portray the scale of the event, and the Soviets' initial hesitancy to grasp said scale. The event severely damaged the Union's foreign relations, exposing their systematic secrecy and mismanagement, which was worsened by their attempt to hide the accident. The scale of the catastrophe reinforced Gorbachev's policy on openness, forcing international cooperation and turning improved relations with the West into a top priority. (It is important to note for delegates to understand that this event is not preventable even if your starting date might be before it. That would be meta-ing, a term that will be covered in session 1 of the conference.)

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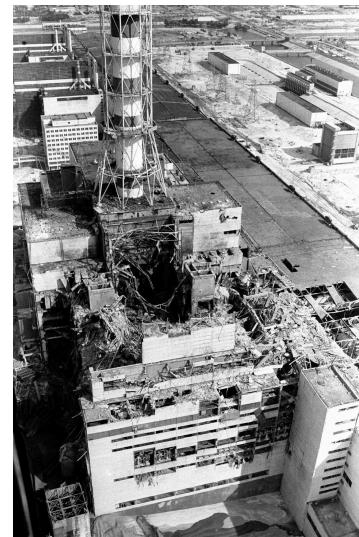
[8] https://www.britannica.com/event/Warsaw-Pact
[9] The test should have been conducted before the reactor was ever put into use, but to save time and money the Soviets decided to open the plant and run the tests later.
[10] https://world-nuclear.org/information-library/safety-and-security/safety-of-plants/chernobyl-accident

4.2. Organizational Structure

Similar to every superpower state with international reach, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR)'s political decision-making structure is constituted by numerous governmental bodies. In descending order of authority, these institutions are the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU), the Soviet Politburo, the Central Committee (CC), and Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti (KGB) and the Soviet Armed Forces.

Each institution occupies a distinct role in the governance of the USSR. First and foremost, the CPSU's duty is to lead and control the Soviet state and society under Marxist-Leninist principles. Secondly, the Soviet Politburo is tasked with formulating all major decisions of the Soviet state regarding military, economy, foreign relations, and politics and issuing directives for their implementation. Thirdly, the CC's primary task is to provide formal authority for, and oversee the execution of, decisions made by the Soviet Politburo between Party Congresses. Fourthly, the KGB is responsible for foreign intelligence, domestic counterintelligence, technical intelligence, protection of the political leadership, security of Soviet frontiers, and population surveillance. Finally, the duty of the Soviet Armed Forces is to defend the socialist state, protect its revolutionary gains, deter external threats, and maintain peace under CPSU governance.

These five core bodies of the USSR's government steer Soviet administration and ensure that state interests are advanced and accommodated regardless of surrounding conditions. Whether maintaining internal order, projecting influence, interfering in the internal affairs of smaller states, or constructing a simple factory; these structures pull the strings. The attributes, dynamics, and inner mechanisms of the aforementioned agencies will be further elaborated in the upcoming sections. At the time the committee is set place;

4.2.1. The Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU)

The CPSU prevailed from the Bolshevik organization that seized power during the Russian Revolution in the 1920s. It later -through correct political maneuvering- evolved into the central governing institution of the Soviet governance structure. In 1985, it has transitioned from a revolutionary organization to a fully institutionalized ruling party that exercises decisive authority over the political and societal domain of the USSR. As the supreme political authority situated above all formal state institutions, it thrives in a noncompetitive political party

ecosystem. Although state bodies were given constrained liberty in enacting laws, decrees, and plans, they were dictated by the Party. Thus, routine administration is carried out by government bodies while the Party controls all outcomes.

CPSU authority is exercised through a centralized and hierarchical organization scheme that extends from central leadership to approximately 390,000 primary Party organizations. These organizations in question are installed within ministries, industrial enterprises, collective farms, military, education, and mass organizations. Thereby, enabling perpetual administrative supervision and uniform execution of Party directives. At the national level, the CPSU's principal organs designate general state objectives. The Party utilizes personnel management as a central control mechanism, through which Party members are systematically installed in critical positions across the state, economy, armed forces, and security services. In the end, making Party membership compulsory for advancement within the Soviet elite.

Formally, the Party Congress is the CPSU's supreme body and convened approximately every five years to elect the Central Committee, which meets periodically between congresses. In practice, effective authority resides in the Politburo and the Secretariat responsible for day-to-day Party administration. Although these bodies are nominally elective, their membership is largely repetitive. Today, the CPSU has nearly 19 million members. Recruitment and cadre development is supported by the All-Union Lenin League of Communist Youth (Komsomol), while ideological coordination and internal communication are maintained through Party publications such as Pravda and Kommunist. Conclusively, the CPSU is a command and supervisory institution that integrates all policy-making across the state.

4.2.2. The Soviet Politburo/Presidium of the Central Committee

The Soviet Politburo -or the Presidium of the Central Committee- is the supreme command body of the Soviet system that constitutes the effective center of political power within the CPSU. The Politburo can exercise decisive authority over state policy despite its formal subordination to the Central Committee. Thus, granting it direct control over the Soviet government. Its institutional duty is to formulate binding decisions on major issues of domestic governance, economic planning, military affairs, and foreign policy, which are subsequently executed by Party and state organs. Organizationally, the Politburo is a small, elite body typically composed of approximately 24 full members. These members are selected from the highest ranks

of the Party leadership, which is formally determined by election within the Central Committee, but in practice the body is self-perpetuating, with new members chosen through internal consensus among incumbent leaders instead of competitive procedures. This is advantageous in leadership continuity and limited accountability to lower Party bodies.

It is a collective executive that convenes regular assemblies to shape cross-sector governance policies. With a fluctuating power balance within, it operates as a primary collegial decision-making forum from the Brezhnev period into the mid-1980s. All decisions reached within the Politburo carry binding authority and are issued in the name of the Central Committee or relevant state institutions. Thereby, this maintains formal hierarchy while concentrating real power within the Politburo itself. Functionally, the Politburo connects Party leadership and state tools. It supervises the Secretariat's activities, influences high-level personnel appointments, and exercises oversight over the armed forces and other security services through Party channels. Therefore, translating ideological priorities into materialized action.

As of today, the Politburo continues to be the center of authority in the Soviet system that can exercise control over the entire country.

4.2.3. The Central Committee (CC)

In a formal sense, the CC CPSU is the highest Party organ between Party Congresses. But in practice, it is more of an elite administrative and legitimization body than an autonomous policymaker. Its principal task is to audit the transmission and execution of decisions enacted by the senior Party leadership. In 1985, the Central Committee is composed of approximately 300 members. This populace is divided into members with full voting and candidate members without voting rights. This membership procedure is adopted by the CC to serve as a screening and reserve mechanism; enabling the leadership to assess whether a member is politically reliable and administratively competent before full promotion.

Within the CC, membership is heavily concentrated around the Party apparatchiki (members of a Communist Party apparat) and senior administrators. A majority of full members -and a significant portion of candidates- are primarily tied to the Party apparatus career-wise. Their positions are further reinforced with secondary representation from heavy industry, agriculture, military command, and state administration, while light industry and non-administrative professions remain marginal since the CC membership prioritizes

control-relevant sectors over social representation. Educationally, the CC elite exhibit powerful, technical, politically specialized profiles. As a projection of the Party's preference for cadres capable of supervising complex systems, which is the reason behind why members possessed higher education in engineering, agronomy, military, academies, or Party schools. Some candidate members even show a higher proportion of exclusive Party school education to reinforce their status as politically vetted trainees.

Following Stalin's death, an increasing number of members shifted from sectoral professions to Party apparatus occupations. These career patterns have transitioned the CC into an administrative nucleus that connected leadership decisions to the broader party spectrum. Operationally, these attributes make the CC a bureaucratic transition belt. It holds tightly managed meetings with agendas and resolutions prepared in advance. Agreed decisions are mainly to confer collective authority and legitimacy on policies formulated elsewhere. As of today, the CC's importance derives from its capacity to integrate elite recruitment and administrative supervision across the Soviet state system.

4.2.4. The KGB

The KGB -at times referred to as the Committee for State Security- is the principal internal security, intelligence, and covert enforcement tool of Moscow. It is simultaneously the "sword and shield" of the Union. The committee is institutionally inferior to the CPSU and functions as an executive utility of Party authority. The KGB maintains many objectives that revolve around the preservation of regime stability through surveillance, counterintelligence, and coercive Party control enforcement. Structurally, it is organized into approximately 20 central directorates, several of which are dedicated principally to internal functions. These comprise directorates responsible for domestic counterintelligence, ideological monitoring, leadership protection, and border security. A specialized directorate is devoted to surveying religious institutions, the intelligentsia (status class of university-educated people regarded as possessing cultural or political influence), and suspected dissidents. This specialization enables close internal threat control under centralized command.

The KGB sustains operational presence in virtually all major institutions within a nationwide territorial network across union-republic, regional, city, and district levels. In 1985, total personnel exceeds 480,000, including nearly 200,000 Border Guard troops tasked with

auditing population movement and intercepting unauthorized exits from the USSR. This structure is complemented with an extensive informant network that numbers millions stationed across workplaces, educational institutions, cultural organizations, and residential communities. Internally, the KGB is responsible for continuous population and elite surveillance and political, nationalist, religious, and intellectual opposition. For the sake of Soviet unity, the KGB employs communications interception, group infiltration, compromising material collection, administrative sanctions, arrests, and internal exile. Owing to extensive KGB efforts, organized dissent had been mostly eradicated, while remaining opposition was divided.

Another surprising function of the KGB resides in elite discipline. It conducts surveillance on Party officials, government administrators, military officers, and economic managers. It materializes its observations into action by reporting (mostly arbitrarily) on corruption and disloyalty to Party leadership. While the KGB is relatively active in foreign operations, its internal activities often overshadows its external operations. As of today, KGB constitutes one of the three components of Soviet political powers, alongside the CPSU and the Armed Forces. The KGB's central occupation in many state affairs concerning national integrity, it is an indispensable yet threatening institution.

4.2.5. The Soviet Armed Forces

The Soviet Armed Forces -commonly referred to as the Red Army although that title had been officially dropped in 1946- is the USSR's central armed security mechanism that comprises 4.8 million active personnel reinforced with tens of millions of reservists and a nationwide mobilization system with rapid expansion capabilities. Such a scale necessitates direct integration into political leadership, foreign relations, economic planning, and alliances. Despite common misconceptions about its autonomy, the Armed Forces are subordinated to the CPSU and function under constant political oversight to prevent rogue military actors. Institutionally, the Armed Forces' authority is accumulated at the highest Party-state levels. The CPSU controls the Armed Forces politically while the General Staff conducts operational planning under tight supervision. Senior commanders are selected as much for political reliability as for professional competence. While this arrangement guarantees party compliance, independent military judgement and adaptability are severely restricted.

Organizationally, the command system is centralized and oriented toward large-scale war. The USSR is divided into multiple Military Districts that serve a dual purpose: administrative centers during peace and military theater during war. Planning is pre-defined scenario-based that involves hundreds of divisions specialized for rapid execution when authorization is granted. Simultaneously, early and decisive crisis management is preferred over prolonged uncertainty due to inflexible lower-level autonomy that encourages leadership preferences. Structurally, Armed Forces policy is Ground Forces-dominated; comprising 180 divisions with a substantial proportion forward-deployed in Eastern Europe. Despite its immediate coercion capability provision and allied state control reinforcements, the system generates political and economic commitment costs. Thereby, transforming military deployments into a standing policy obligation to maintain perpetual readiness. Strategically, nuclear forces are incorporated into overall military planning and remain under centralized political control under the Soviet Strategic Rocket Troops. In 1985, the USSR maintains approximately 40,000 nuclear warheads across the Belarussian, Ukrainian, Kazakh, Estonian, and -mostly- Russian SSRs. The highest political level retains launch authority and treats nuclear weapons as state policy utilities rather than military assets. This situation is among the main contributors of foreign tension.

Economically, the Armed Forces exert influence across Soviet planning through their integration with the military-industrial complex. It absorbs a disproportionate share of industrial output and skilled labor with military production receiving priority in research efforts and heavy industry. Therefore, the Armed Forces consume ≈15% of annual GDP for its expenditures. While it upkeeps force levels and modernization, it pressures the civilian economy. By 1985, the Armed Forces' sustained military prioritization deteriorates the Soviet economy and limits the range of viable policy choices. In effect, the Armed Forces influence Soviet policies through their permanent presence in security and economic nodes. This size and readiness nurtures stability while consuming Soviet flexibility. Thus, Soviet military power is a double-edged sword that maintains the regime's power while constraining it in the long-term.

4.3. Perestroika and Glasnost

The last leader of the Soviet Union, Mikhail Gorbachev, introduced two policies: Glasnost and Perestroika. Even though Glasnost (*openness*) was a keyword that had a place in Soviet Russian law and politics, it was only a word that was merely uttered and did not hold any weight.

The Glasnost policy however, was to implement openness in office and in media. Perestroika, the counterpart to glasnost that aimed *restructuring* for the economy, decentralizing it in hopes of profit.

4.3.1. Perestroika

Perestroika is an unusual approach to the stagnated Soviet economic and political system that was put forward by Gorbachev. The economic counterpart to Glasnost. It's the policy that focused on _restructuring_ the systems by implementing certain laws. The goal of Perestroika was to bring the Soviet Union closer to the economic level of the west to soften the effects of socialism without abandoning it. The implementations were for a more free market in the Soviet Union with actions like allowing private profit which came with its own chaos in and of itself for the nation. Despite the ambitious goals, Perestroika faced surprising internal resistance. Bureaucrats with important titles, fearing a loss of power, often hindered these reforms while the transition away from state subsidies led to rising prices and severe shortages of basic consumer goods. Rather than saving the socialist system, the economic instability created by Perestroika deepened public frustration. By the time Gorbachev attempted to expand these reforms into the political sphere, introducing multi-candidate elections, the economic foundation of the Soviet Union had already begun to crumble, contributing to the eventual collapse of the Eastern Bloc.

4.3.2. Glasnost

While Perestroika was more about the political and the economic landscape of the Soviet Union, Glasnost was about the communications and the social environment of the nation. Historically, the Soviet Union had been characterized by intense state secrecy and the suppression of dissent. With this policy, Gorbachev aimed to include citizens in the political process and reduce the corruption that had beset the bureaucracy and was to implement a bit more freedom into the Soviet system to hopefully help eradicate the current issues surrounding the nation. Some censorship and control policies like many banned books, filtered news were now much more open thanks to Glasnost. While the implementations were a huge step for a more "free" Soviet Union, it ultimately backfired when nationalism became an issue with nations like countries of the Warsaw Pact easily expressing their demand for independence and people's freedom to criticize the system also paved the way for foreign interference and crippling the nation.

5. Keywords and Key Concepts

Able Archer 83: NATO command-post exercise, which was done so realistically that the Soviets suspected a real nuclear strike.

Berlin Wall: A barrier between East and West Germany, which is also a symbol of the Cold War division.

Brezhnev Doctrine: Soviet policy asserting the right to intervene in socialist countries to preserve communist rule.

Central Committee(CC): The senior governing body of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) between party congresses.

Cold War: The prolonged confrontation between the socialists of USSR and the capitalist West.

Chernobyl Disaster: A nuclear disaster that occurred in the Soviet Union in 1986

Era of Stagnation: The prolonged period of weakening economic power and declining productivity in the Union.

Glasnost: Gorbachev's policy that focused on openness and transparency by allowing more freedom of expression, especially in the media.

Iron Curtain: The name given to describe the ideological and political division between Eastern and Western Europe

Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti (KGB): Soviet secret intelligence agency.

Perestroika: Gorbachev's policy that focused on restructuring the Soviet political and economic system.

Soviet Politburo: Elite executive body of the CPSU, where decision-making procedure was conducted

Red Army: Also known as the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army (RKKA) created in 1917 after the Bolshevik Revolution, was the backbone of the Armed Forces of the USSR for decades. The red army largely consisted of workers and peasants in its early years which gives it the name.

Warsaw Pact: Soviet-led alliance formed to counter NATO.

6. Expectations and Conclusion

While the coup attempt changed the course of the future of the USSR, what would happen if the attempted coup didn't happen? Or what would happen if the coup were successful?

We will gather to find the answer to the given question: How can we change the attempt? Depending on your cabinets, you will work on the success rate of the coup attempt while maintaining the best interest for the USSR and the people. Since everyone that has a part in the coup attempt changes titles and gains/loses power throughout history, you should work on moving your way up the ranks and gaining as much power as you can. Make connections. Be aware of your surroundings. Break other connections if necessary. Hear the Machiavelli living deep inside your consciousness and have a listen. Heed his advice. "The lion cannot protect himself from traps, and the fox cannot defend himself from wolves. One must therefore be a fox to recognize traps, and a lion to frighten wolves."

Starting from 1985, leading to 1991, you will have the chance to rewrite the circumstances and the events leading to the coup. What we want from you is to try to do your best to make sure you try to gain the loyalty of the people and make them side with your ideals.

This committee is based more on trying to get the circumstances in your favor and increasing the welfare level of the people while keeping economical and political stability (even though we will have war-based updates from time to time this is not a war committee). Gain power and make alliances accordingly.

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