# End of the Cold War Timeline

**1960s**
USSR spending 20% of its annual budget on defence. Failed economic policies led to people starving. USSR has to import supplies from the West.

**1961**
Sino-Soviet split.

**1967-1979**
Détente – a period of easing in tensions between the US and USSR.

**1979**
Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.

**1980**
Solidarity trade union established in Poland and quickly gains 10 million members.

**1982**
Solidarity banned in Poland.

**1983**
President Reagan announces Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI).

**1985**
Mikhail Gorbachev becomes leader of the USSR and introduces policies of glasnost and perestroika.

**1986**
Chernobyl disaster almost bankrupts the USSR.

**1988**
Protests spread throughout Poland due to the further decline in the economy.

**1989**
Poland agrees to new elections with reduced influence for communists guaranteed. Solidarity legalised & formed coalition without the communists = anti-communist government.

**1989**
After the reintroduction of multi-party democracy, the border between Austria and Hungary opened and free movement allowed. Many fled from Hungary and East Germany to the West.

**8th November 1989**
After protests against hardline Honecker, Berlin Wall brought down and the border between East and West Germany was opened

**November 1989**
Velvet Revolution in Czechoslovakia.

**December 1989**
Romanian Revolution – communist leader Nicolae Ceausesecu is overthrown.

**1990**
Germany reunited.

**1990-91**
Former Soviet Republics of the USSR declare themselves independent (Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and Georgia).

**1991**
Russia declares itself a republic and Boris Yeltsin is elected as leader.

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