

Foreign Policy of the Truman through Nixon Administrations - Example 4 Answer

Which event led directly to the end of the cold war?

- a. reunification of Germany
- b. formation of the European Union
- c. breakup of the Soviet Union
- d. creation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)

Answer

C. the breakup of the Soviet Union.

The **Cold War period of 1985–1991** began with the rise of Mikhail Gorbachev as leader of the Soviet Union. Gorbachev was a revolutionary leader for the USSR, as he was the first to promote liberalization of the political landscape (Glasnost) and capitalist elements into the economy (Perestroika); prior to this, the USSR had been strictly prohibiting liberal reform and maintained an inefficient centralized economy. The USSR, facing massive economic difficulties, was also greatly interested in reducing the costly arms race with the U.S. President Ronald Reagan, although peaceful confrontation and arms buildups throughout much of his term prevented the USSR from cutting back its military spending as much as it might have liked. Regardless, the USSR began to crumble as liberal reforms proved difficult to handle and capitalist changes to the centralized economy were badly transitioned and caused major problems. After a series of revolutions in Soviet Bloc states, the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991.