

## **US History**

### **The Cold War - B**

#### **Learning Target:**

*I can examine the final events leading to the fall of the Soviet Union.*

### **7. The End Of The Cold War**

#### ***President Bush & A Changing Soviet Union –***

- USSR held its first democratic election since 1917
- The new freer Soviet economy was failing however

#### ***Soviet Economic Problems –***

- Many argue that the arms race supported by Reagan forced the Soviet Union to ignore economic problems at home contributing to the instability of the economy
- Due to Soviet economic problems the USSR announced in 1989 it would no longer support other communist governments in Eastern and Central Europe
- Eastern Europe immediately starts to break away from the Soviet Union

Three examples:

1. Free elections were held in Poland and Hungary
2. Communist governments in Czechoslovakia and Romania fell without Soviet intervention
3. The fall of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989 and the reunification of Germany on October 3, 1990

#### ***The Fall of the Soviet Union –***

- 1991 – An attempted removal of Gorbachev by Communist hard-liners foreshadowed the end of power for Gorbachev
- December 1, 1991 – Ukraine voted for independence
- December 25, 1991 – Gorbachev resigned as president of the Soviet Union and gave power of the armed forces to Boris Yeltsin, president of Russia
- December 26, 1991 – Presidents of Belarus, Russia, and the Ukraine announced the end of the existence of the Soviet Union and the beginning of the Commonwealth of Independent States – a very loose confederation