

# Extended Essay: The fall of The Soviet Union

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## **Abstract**

This essay has a focus on the economical factors that contributed to the fall of the Soviet Union, with the research question, "What were the most significant economical factors in the fall of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic?" With this question in mind, several areas within the soviet economy are gone through with a wide range of views of the different sectors, ranging from industries, agriculture, military, to the personal level. The research portion of this essay was made with the use of historians and experts of the field, their different views of these sectors provided a much clearer picture of where the soviet economy's faults lies. Some of the issues brought up by the historians concerned included, difficulties with finding labour, bad organisation, heavy emphasis on the heavy industry, as well as a very backwards agricultural system. Once these observations were collected and gone through thoroughly, a discussion with the views of the included historians was made. However only the historians who wrote after the fall were part of the discussion section, as they have the benefit of hindsight while others wrote their works as contemporary works before the fall. After the comparison between the historians and their views, I wrote my own conclusion and defined the factors that I saw as the main problems for the Soviet Union and its economy, while I understand that there were other reasons, based on politics and cultural differences, the conclusion had a focus on the economy, in order to answer my research question. The result was that it wasn't a single factor or even a few, but that all the factors were interconnected and as such, that it was a combination of all the factors that eventually overwhelmed the Soviet Economy and lead to its downfall.

Word Count: 296

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## **Introduction**

The fall of the Soviet Union was one of the biggest political changes in modern history and the fall itself can be credited to many reasons. Some were political, some were social, and some were economical. Throughout this essay, the economical aspect will be covered because of its huge impact on social and political factors that lead to the downfall of the USSR. As such the research question will be, "What were the most significant economical factors in the fall of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic?" The essay itself is based on several second-hand sources written by established historians and experts on the Cold War and the Soviet Union in particular. Within this essay an explanation of the industrial stagnation that hit the Soviet Union during the 70s and onwards will take place, as well as a background on the backward agriculture, the socio-economical factors, and the Soviet Union's arms- and technological-race with the United States while also bringing up the war in Afghanistan and 'star wars'. I will also bring up the weaknesses of Comecon<sup>1</sup>, and Soviet Union's foreign economical factors. I will finally discuss Gorbachev's attempts at economical reforms and how they fail before reaching summarizing of the historians views and the discussion between them, followed by my own thoughts and conclusion.

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<sup>1</sup> The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance

# Domestic Economic Problems

## Industrial Stagnation

During the mid 70s the 'era of stagnation'<sup>2</sup> had begun and with it, deceleration had followed. The industrial growth of the prior decades had started falling and had cascading effects on the Soviet Union. This slowdown seemed to have occurred on both the supply side and the demand side of the industry<sup>3</sup>, with lowered consumption rates and investments fuelling the decelerating production within several key sectors.<sup>4</sup> To add to this problem, several industrial sectors received less capital in favour of heavy industry and military spending.<sup>5</sup> While up to the 70s the Soviet Union had been increasing its employment levels though massive investments to the industry, it was now facing a large demand for labour, even exceeding that of supply. This became such a huge problem that government directives made it a punishable offence to be voluntarily-unemployed.<sup>6</sup> As the Soviet Economy worked by meeting five year plans<sup>7</sup>; costs for extra labour was not taken into account and left many parts of the industry outside its maximal profit potential.<sup>8</sup> The industry was also plagued with forgeries and falsifications to meet plan targets, many directors hid resources to maintain what seemed to be a steady growth, in order to avoid being given unattainable

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<sup>2</sup> Refers to the period of stagnation that started during the 70s

<sup>3</sup> Appendix A & B

<sup>4</sup> Hanson 2003, p. 132-133

<sup>5</sup> Kennedy 1989, p. 550

<sup>6</sup> Hanson 2003, p. 172

<sup>7</sup> A series of government issued targets for the economy to reach, issued every five years.

<sup>8</sup> Watson 1989. p. 64-65

targets in the following years. At that rate, the economy was not working at its potential, and was kept down because of strict planning and a command market system.<sup>9</sup>

## Agriculture Decline

The industry was not the only sector to experience hardship from the 70s and onwards, the fragile agricultural system was heading towards a general slowdown<sup>10</sup>, it would have grave consequences on many factors throughout the Soviet Union. While the overall agriculture growth per year during had been roughly 4.8% and 3% in the 50s and 60s respectively, the growth rate had dropped to 1.8% during the 70s, this rate would remain abide some fluctuations.<sup>11</sup> This in itself became a huge problem as the Soviet population growth was moving at a slightly faster rate than agriculture. This was bad for the promises of higher living standards that had been made in 9th five-year plan.<sup>12</sup> Because this, the Soviet Union was forced to import more and more foodstuffs for each passing year. Imports got even higher during bad agricultural years such as the time period between 79' and 82'. Attempts to increase farmland through the exploitation of new lands were restricted because of the harsh frosts in the north and the barren and arid lands to the south. On top of this, the government investment going towards agriculture was usually misspent on large scale projects rather than providing farmers with the equipment that they sought. Even though there were opportunities for reforms, it was usually kept silent in order to retain the idea that the collectivized system was not a failure, even if this visage meant importing more

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<sup>9</sup> Hanson 2003, p. 145

<sup>10</sup> Appendix C & D

<sup>11</sup> Kennedy 1989, p. 556

<sup>12</sup> Watson 1989. p. 66

foodstuffs.<sup>13</sup> While government were poorly allocated, there were also major problems within the actual infrastructure of the agricultural system. Inefficiency was a problem, as farmers were already guaranteed an amount of income from the state, there was no incentive to do more than required (excluding the few and small private plots of course). There was also a problem of storage for equipment such as tractors, that were left in the cold winter as there was no way of protecting them for the average farmer, it was also estimated that a third of the livestock was lost each year because of bad care.<sup>14</sup> Even when the foodstuffs were produced, around 20% of normal harvests were lost because of poor storage capabilities, roads that depended on the weather and a bad distribution system that allowed foods to spoil before reaching destinations.<sup>15</sup>

## Factors of the Individual

While government policies might rule the countries, the backbone of an economy is based on its people. This was a problem for the Soviet Union, as it was intentionally keeping consumer demand low in order to allocate more of its resources for its military and heavy industries. While this might have been a solution to keep up in the arms race with the US, its negative factors weakened its economy. Unlike the western countries, the Soviet Union did not receive an economical boost from its weak demand-side.<sup>16</sup> Besides the overall demand side, the social conditions that faced the people were also causing adverse effects. With an increasing decline in the economy, rationing became somewhat commonplace with several

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<sup>13</sup> Kennedy 1989, p. 633-636

<sup>14</sup> Coleman 1996, p. 258-259

<sup>15</sup> Kennedy 1989, p. 635

<sup>16</sup> Kennedy 1989, p. 555

commodities, and the lines of people waiting for food increased.<sup>17</sup> As rationing became stricter, more black markets and corruption started showing up. People with administrative positions had a tendency to misuse public resources in order to survive.<sup>18</sup> With decreasing living standards, the labour discipline also started dropping, in general less skilled and productive labour could be found.<sup>19</sup> Alcoholism had also turned into a major problem, drinking on the job wasn't rare and it was further effecting work safety, performance and output. The consumption of alcohol also had an impact on the life expectancy which was shown to have dropped, because of alcohol related deaths.<sup>20</sup> In conjunction with this there was a decline in the quality of medical care, sanitation, and housing. There was even an increase in infant mortality during these times.<sup>21</sup> A combination of poverty, alcohol and poorer living standards kept the Soviet Union four years behind the developed countries at seventy years, in terms of life expectancy.<sup>22</sup>

## International Economic Problems

### Comecon

The Council for Mutual Economic Assistance or perhaps better known as 'Comecon' was an economically oriented organization which aimed to improve and stimulate the economies of the Soviet Union and its eastern bloc allies. The membership consisted of

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<sup>17</sup> Dunlop 1993, p. 82

<sup>18</sup> Watson 1989, p. 69

<sup>19</sup> Sakwa 1999, p. 351

<sup>20</sup> Hanson 2003, p. 179

<sup>21</sup> Kennedy 1989, p. 643

<sup>22</sup> Hanson 2003, p. 247

countries around the world but was mostly centered in Europe.<sup>23</sup> <sup>24</sup> The trade within the organization and its pricing was commonly decided instead of allowing market forces determine the prices as in the rest of the world. The prices were usually decided based on the average world price of the specific good for the last five years, and they were kept at this level for five years. While this might have been beneficial while the outside price got higher, but it also had the risk of creating a price lag with falling prices outside of Comecon and as such the potential of using less money to gain the same resources was lost. Comecon was not extensively regulated and this resulted in the member nations committing bilateral trade agreements with each other, with prices set; only quantities of the goods concerned the different nations.<sup>25</sup> From a statistical point of view, the average Comecon country sold roughly one third of its exports directly to the Soviet Union, another third to the other Comecon countries, and the rest being exported to the rest of the world (at competitive prices).<sup>26</sup> However, there were problems with the Soviet Union importing from its Comecon allies. As prices were experiencing a price lag compared to the western world, it wasn't uncommon for the Soviet Union to pay a very hefty sum for goods and labour that would have been cheaper elsewhere. In fact, some goods were intentionally held high and were not equally affected by the average world price as other goods. The Soviet Union paid almost twice the usual amount for machinery of different sorts, and on its own export side, it provided the Comecon countries with very cheap energy resources such as oil and natural gases. In effect this showed that the Soviet Union was not gaining as much financial benefit

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<sup>23</sup> European countries such as, Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Poland, and Romania. Other non-European members consisted of Mongolia, Cuba, and Vietnam.

<sup>24</sup> Watson 1989. p. 86

<sup>25</sup> Hanson 2003, p. 202

<sup>26</sup> Watson 1989. p. 168-169

as they could have gotten in the free market system.<sup>27</sup> In fact the way that the Soviet Union conducted their trade within Comecon suggests that the imports of overpriced goods and exporting energy resources at world low prices were in fact ways for the Soviet Union to subsidize their eastern bloc allies and allow them to develop at a higher rate.<sup>28</sup>

## Foreign economical factors

The Soviet Union had several economical obligations with nations throughout the world, all with different economical natures. Some were third world countries in need of funding to support their communist regimes, while others needed arms to ensue conflicts, and of course some imported soviet goods or exported their goods to the Soviet Union.<sup>29</sup> In the terms of conflicts and regimes, the Soviet Union went on its way to provide funds as well as equipment to allow the communism to spread throughout the world, countries that received these funds include, Afghanistan, Cuba, and the contemporary North Vietnam. While these transfers were political in nature, they did put small amounts of strain on the Soviet Economy, until they joined Comecon<sup>30</sup>. In terms of imports and exports, the Soviet Union tried to keep a small and balanced trade balance. However, there are some fluctuations, for instance during the Oil Crisis of 1973<sup>31</sup> the price of Oil increased at an alarming rate, this being in the favour of the Soviet Union which was not a member of OPEC<sup>32</sup>. However the negative implications of the crisis increased the overall prices in the

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<sup>27</sup> Hanson 2003, p. 156

<sup>28</sup> Pearson 1998, p. 61

<sup>29</sup> Coleman 1996. p. 301-302

<sup>30</sup> Hanson 2003, p. 119

<sup>31</sup> An oil-price crisis caused by an oil embargo against the US after their support for Israel in the Yom Kippur War.

<sup>32</sup> A trade block consisting of countries that export oil. Membership includes Algeria, Angola, Ecuador, Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Libya, Nigeria, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Venezuela.

western countries through the inflation caused by the new oil prices. In short, this made the amount of Soviet imports more expensive.<sup>33</sup> This became worse with the agricultural crisis that was starting to take root in the Soviet Union, where the government had to start importing more and more foodstuffs primarily from the US. As time went on prices normalized after the oil crisis and the economical benefits disappeared, while the agricultural- and import-needs did not.<sup>34</sup> The Soviet Union also gain some financial benefit from its hard-currency trade in the form of the selling of gold, weapons, and also from lending. However, while the Soviet Union tried to have balanced foreign trade, it was still a minor part of the overall economy and more than half the trade was conducted through Comecon. But as we get closer to the fall, one can see the increase of imports in the form of foods which without a doubt put strain on the economy and its social needs.<sup>35</sup>

### **Arms- and technological-race**

Even though, the Soviet Union was experiencing a slowdown in its economical side, its arms- and technological-race with the western world and America in particular, was taking its toll. Some estimate the total spending of the soviet GNP to its military as high as 40% during the late 70s. This money had been strategically used for the Soviet's nuclear stockpiles, navy, and other military projects.<sup>36</sup> There was concern about the military receiving too much government spending and it causing a neglecting of the importance of the overall economy, and it reached its climax with the introduction of space weapons. While the initial space race had largely taken place from the mid 50s to the early 70s, there was now

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<sup>33</sup> Hanson 2003, p. 154,156

<sup>34</sup> Kennedy 1989, p. 633

<sup>35</sup> Hanson 2003, p. 155

<sup>36</sup> Sakwa 1999, p. 360-361

a new concept connected to space. Space-militarization and the use of space based weapons. The pressure of these new high-technological weapons were not well met in the Soviet Union from an economical stance and with the announcement of the SDI<sup>37</sup> or Reagan's commonly called 'Star Wars' program, threatened to push the soviet military budget beyond its limit.<sup>38</sup> Meeting the new challenge that the US now presented, a challenge that could have potentially made the contemporary weapons obsolete, the Soviet Union had little to no choice but to aim from a mutual disarmament and the strife for a cooperative future. The economy was simple not strong enough to handle a revived and stronger spending into the military and the research of higher levelled technologies.<sup>39</sup> At the time, the situation with the stagnated economy and the falling social factors had grown to high, without major reforms of all economical levels of society, more resources for a counter measures for the SDI was outside the Soviet's reach.<sup>40</sup>

## Afghan War

The Soviet's choice of military spending despite its economical hardship lead up to the Soviet involvement in the Afghan Civil War<sup>41</sup>, which in itself put even great strain on military spending, particularly up towards the end of the Soviet involvement. The Soviets had at one point over 100,000 men active in Afghanistan as well as their most sophisticated weaponry. While the war had started with hubris and the belief that the Mujahideen could easily be dealt with, time showed that the soviet military had underestimated their enemy as

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<sup>37</sup> Strategic Defense Initiative, an anti-nuclear missile project created in 1983 by US president Ronald Reagan.

<sup>38</sup> Pearson 1998, p. 103-104

<sup>39</sup> Kennedy 1989, p. 648

<sup>40</sup> Dunlop 1993, p. 4

<sup>41</sup> Civil War from 1979 to 1989, fought between the Democratic Republic of Afghanistan (supported by the Soviet Union) and the Mujahideen.

well as overestimated their capacity of fighting in the Afghan terrain, their tanks were of no use in the mountain ranges and the average soldier's gear was worn out within weeks. Politics hindered a retreat as it might have appeared as a 'Soviet Vietnam'<sup>42</sup> <sup>43</sup> as such the Soviet Union persistently allocated resources into Afghanistan for almost ten years. In the end the military could not be supported by a weakened economy with poor social factors.<sup>44</sup> While the war had been costly for the Soviet Union, it had also created an international outrage against the Soviet Union. During this time, the Soviet Union was importing foods, mainly in the form of grain from the US. This trade agreement received a lot of tension, eventually culminating in trade sanctions after the Christmas 1979 following the soviet intervention in Afghanistan.<sup>45</sup> Overall the war's costs brought damage to the economy and further weakened it.

## Economical reforms

By the mid 1980s the Soviet Union seemed to have reached a complete standstill, their industries had stagnated and its agricultural structure was based on an overwhelming amount of imports. The US and its 'star wars' program also pressured the Soviet Union to commit more money to its military, however at this point, Its already stretched thin financial assets could not meet the demands of the army. After his new office, Mikhail Gorbachev<sup>46</sup> set out to reshape the Soviet's weak economy. He intended to do so with the 'Perestroika' reforms, or the restructure in plain English.<sup>47</sup> The main aims of the reforms were to lessen the

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<sup>42</sup> The War in Vietnam ended in withdrawal and shame for the United States.

<sup>43</sup> Pearson 1998, p. 116

<sup>44</sup> Pearson 1998, p. 170

<sup>45</sup> Hanson 2003, p. 155

<sup>46</sup> The General Secretary of the Communist party and the head of state of the Soviet Union from 1985 until 1991 and the end of the Soviet Union.

<sup>47</sup> Dunlop 1993, p. 4

defence sector of the Soviet Union and try to provide the means for the economy to sustain its own growth through consumption, much like in the western world. There was also the obvious problem with the agricultural system that had been weak since the early 70s and it was seen as a main concern for the reforms.<sup>48</sup> The idea was to allow privatized farming, in order to increase output compared to the sluggish state farms that had been failing to meet the ever increasing demands. Privatization was also going to affect, industries in general. Companies would be allowed to choice their own source of resources and decide their own output levels instead of using government supplies and meeting government plans.<sup>49</sup> The overall hope with these fundamental changes was that private consumption and competition that had been lacking would enter the economical system, stimulate it, and allow it to grow.<sup>50</sup> With a new and privately fuelled system, the Soviet Union was looking to improve its efficiency; however there were still restriction to many aspects of the economy, in order to keep the society stable as it had been since before the 70s.<sup>51</sup> While economical figures show great improvement within the last years of the Soviet Union, the economical reforms had opened both social and political wounds from the past. While not the intention with the new economical freedoms, it did hurt the stability of the former rigid Soviet Union.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Hanson 2003, p. 100-101

<sup>49</sup> Coleman 1996. p. 115

<sup>50</sup> Hanson 2003, p. 165

<sup>51</sup> Watson 1989. p. 71

<sup>52</sup> Pearson 1998, p. 127

## Discussion

To give the answer to my research question, it is important to look at what the various historians referenced in this text thought. Sakwa argues that the policies before the 70s created a push for higher living standards, a push that was unrealistic. The push caused the stagnation when new labour forces could not be found, and as the economy started to decline so did the unrest within the Soviet Union. By the time Gorbachev came into power, the system was beyond saving.<sup>53</sup> However, Coleman would say that the economy was in dire need of reform pointing towards the numbers, but he also mentions that the economy would fall because of the reforms, stating simple that the Soviet economy was doomed because of its problems and that would impact the overall stability of the Union.<sup>54</sup> To this, Hanson states that the economical reforms were the cause of the fall, as the sudden changes in economical structures, the more open economy and attempt reviving by restricting harmful matters such as alcohol and opening more economical possibilities caused a cascading effect that resulted with financial problems for the public and overall inflationary pressure on the state itself.<sup>55</sup> It is of both Pearson & Dunlop's opinion that the reforms had to be done because of the economical problems caused by the military expenditures and other foreign factors. Dunlop concludes that the reforms tore down what little stability the Soviet Union had left after its social unrest.<sup>56</sup> Pearson has a minor change in his conclusion and argues that the reforms could have worked, if they were more gradual and hadn't gone as far as they did.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Sakwa 1999, p. XXI

<sup>54</sup> Coleman 1996. p. XI-XVII

<sup>55</sup> Hanson 2003, p. 253-254

<sup>56</sup> Dunlop 1993, p. 3-6

<sup>57</sup> Pearson 1998, p. 157-158

## Conclusion

All the views shown throughout this essay have seemed to have supported a unison thought, the idea of the Soviet Economy not being in a good shape during its last two decades, while this view is common, where should the blame be put? To relate back to my research question, what were the most significant economical factors? To start off, let us look back on the opinions presented, the Soviet Union faced an industrial stagnation with labour shortages, while having a large emphasis on heavy industry. While historians argue that it was the major factor, the backward agricultural system of collectivized farming should also be included as a major factor as it couldn't keep up with the growth in population and forced imports from the west. The military and Soviet Union's 'race' against the west also took a large amount in the state budget, as well as subsidizing for its allies through Comecon, providing other politically aligned nations with weapons and capital, the pinnacle being the war in the Afghan War. The personal level of food and morale was low, the standard of life was on decline, and unrest started to show up. But whose fault was this? If one were to describe the Soviet economy as a system, one would undoubtedly say, it's a planned economy, with the state making the decisions on what to produce and how to distribute it through society. After all, it was the Soviet Union that decided to put major investment into its industries to decrease unemployment prior to the "era of stagnation", it was the government's decision to keep old and rigid farming systems instead of reforming and trying to improve overall efficiency, likewise was it their choice to place importance on the heavy industries and military instead of trying to maintain good economic level throughout all sectors. It was also the choices of the leadership that decided to stay with their political agendas and support and subsidies states around the world, instead of trying to take a larger

part in the world markets and move forward at their maximum potential. While the choices of the Soviet regime might have been conceived to protect their ideology and political agenda, the actual reason of the fall cannot be blame on a single factor alone. This is why I instead argue that it was in fact the culmination of all factors that eventually broke the economy and lead to the need of reforms, but by then it was too late. The factors were intertwined; agriculture had as much to do with living standard as the industrial resource allocations had to do with the Military, and as Comecon had to do with sufficient external imports that might have saved the economy. Imagine the Soviet economy as a human backbone, and the economical choices being weights lifted, as this person adds more weights it gets heavier, while a weight in itself is harmless the combination of all these weights cause the backbone to break. This is what happened to the Soviet Union; a large number of economical burdens caused the economical problems. The leaderships' failure to efficiently control the market caused a problem for many industries (outside the heavy industry). Their reluctance to accept failures and reforms also hindered growth. The backward agricultural system could have been reformed; the war in Afghanistan could have been ended earlier. While alone these factors might have been manageable, however they came as an interconnected stack, one problem lead to the next and vice versa. It wasn't a few factors that brought down the Soviet economy and contributed to the overall downfall. It was the economy itself . . .

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## Appendices

### A – The Era of Stagnation

THE 'ERA OF STAGNATION': 1973–82

Table 5.1A ‘Stagnation’: the slowdown in Soviet growth in the 1970s and early 1980s (selected measures and years, % p.a. rates of change)

	1964–73	1973–82	1973–85
GNP	4.7	1.8	1.8
<i>By sector of origin</i>			
Industry	5.8	3.0	2.9
Agriculture <sup>a</sup>	3.0	−0.3	0.1
<i>By end-use</i>			
Consumption	4.5	2.5	2.5
Investment	5.8	2.3	2.4

Table 5.1B Components in the slowdown between 1964–73 and 1973–85

Component	Change in growth rate (% p.a.)	Weight of component in GNP (%)	Effect (% p.a.)
Industry	−2.9	32.4	−0.9
Agriculture <sup>a</sup>	−2.9	20.6	−0.6
Consumption	−2.0	55.3	−1.1
Investment	−3.4	30.4	−1.0

(Hanson 2003, p. 133)

### B – Gross World Product 1960–80

TABLE 43. Shares of Gross World Product, 1960–80<sup>257</sup>  
(per cent)

	1960	1970	1980
Less-developed countries	11.1	12.3	14.8
Japan	4.5	7.7	9.0
China	3.1	3.4	4.5
European Economic Community	26.0	24.7	22.5
United States	25.9	23.0	21.5
Other developed countries	10.1	10.3	9.7
USSR	12.5	12.4	11.4
Other Communist countries	6.8	6.2	6.1

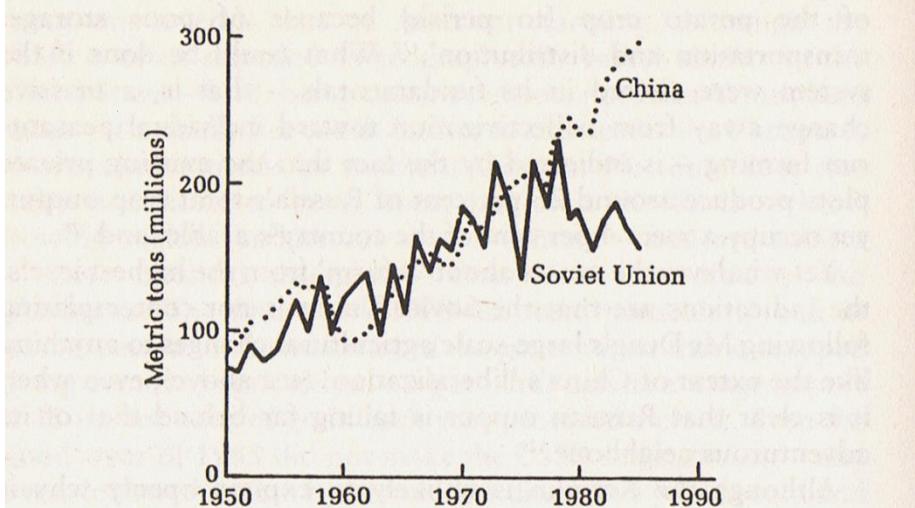
Economic Community’s share even as it remained the largest economic bloc in the world; the stabilization, and then slow decline, of the USSR’s share; and the much faster decline, but still far larger economic muscle, of the United States.

Indeed, by 1980, the final year in Table 43, the World Bank’s figures of population, GNP per capita, and GNP itself, were very much pointing to a *multipolar* distribution of the global economic balances, as shown in Table 44.

(Kennedy 1989, p. 563)

## C - Soviet Grain Production 1950-84

CHART 3. Grain Production in the Soviet Union and China, 1950-84



Source: Brown et al./US Department of Agriculture

(Kennedy 1989, p. 636)

## D - Soviet Agricultural Output

Table 5.3 Soviet output and output per head of population, selected farm products, 1977-82

	Grain	Sugar beet	Potatoes	Green vegetables	Meat (live weight)	Milk	Eggs
<i>A. Officially reported output (including private plots; millions of tons, except eggs in billions of units)</i>							
1977	195.7	93.1	83.7	24.1	14.7	94.9	61.2
1978	237.4	93.5	86.1	27.9	15.5	94.7	64.5
1979	179.2	76.2	91.0	27.2	15.3	93.3	65.6
1980	189.1	81.0	67.0	27.3	15.1	90.9	67.9
1981	149	60.8	72.0	25.6	15.2	88.1	70.9
1982	176	71	78	29	15.2	90.1	72.1
<i>B. Output per head of year-end population (kg, except eggs in units)</i>							
1977	752	358	322	93	57	365	235
1978	905	356	328	106	59	361	246
1979	678	288	344	103	58	353	248
1980	709	304	342	102	57	341	255
1981	554	226	268	95	57	328	264
1982	649	262	288	107	56	332	266

Note: The 1981 and 1982 grain harvest figures are semi-official figures communicated by the Soviet Minister of Agriculture to his Canadian counterpart, and not officially reported in the normal way.

(Hanson 2003, p. 152)