



Social Studies Virtual Learning

10th/World History

TARGET: I can describe life for people living in the USSR and problems that arose within the USSR.

May 7, 2020

Lesson 34

Warm Up

‘Millennials would rather live in a socialist or communist nation rather than under capitalism’.*

This quote is from a recent poll*. As your warm up, respond: Why do many young people feel this way? Try to list three reasons a communist/socialist system would be preferred to a capitalist system.

*<https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2017/nov/4/majority-millennials-want-live-socialist-fascist-o/>

Lesson Activity

Watch the video and read the passage. Respond: What was life probably like for MOST citizens of the Soviet Union? Provide evidence of your claim.

Soviet Life

Soviet living standards have been declining for the past two years, as scarcity and suppressed inflation have surged through the economy. But for more than seventy years the Soviet people have survived—and in many cases prospered—by trading on the wisdom summed up in my friend's aphorism. Anyone who has spent more than a few days in the Soviet Union knows what a complex strategy its citizens have developed to maintain and improve their lives amid perpetual shortage. But the sheer dimensions of the world in which they pursue this strategy—and its role in daily life—are hard for most Americans to grasp.

The largest part lies in a vast gray area that Western economists sometimes genteelly call the Soviets' "second economy." *Blat*, *tolkach*, *shabashniki*, *fartsovshiki*, are terms the Soviets use to describe elements of the world that lies beyond the view of Moscow's statisticians. Roughly translated, they cover aspects of life that range from a generous tip for securing hard-to-find merchandise to the black-market realm of the Soviet Mafia. All economies include such netherworlds, but according to estimates by Gosplan, the Soviet central-planning ministry, this one may account for some \$150 billion a year, which is equivalent to about 11 percent of the Soviet gross domestic product.

Practice

[Soviet Propaganda Film](#)

[Yeltsin in USA - Watch Video](#)

Watch and read the 2 films and article. Compare and contrast them to one another. What were the main differences and similarities? Consider the sources and discuss why each has its point of view.

Responses Vary

The first film was made by the Soviets...the markets look full and prosperous

The Article and film were created by Westerners. They show stark markets and empty shelves

Reflection

A big part of Soviet Life was the KGB, a counterpart to our CIA. The KGB was independent and became the secret police of the Soviet Union. Watch the video and explain how a Soviet citizen might have felt about the KGB. Lastly, write a paragraph about what you think life would have been like in the USSR.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xDBfoSq-l3U>