

From Late Brezhnev to Gorbachev to collapse, 1980 to 1991

Handout #5, 8 February 2019

Leonard G. Friesen

Part I:

Seven Emerging Crises facing the USSR by the late 1970s

- I. Poland, Solidarity, and the Polish Pope (John Paul II), 16 October 1978 -
 - II. Afghanistan, the Soviet "Vietnam", 25 December 1979 –
 - III. The Emergence of Central Asia and Islam (Iran, 1978-1979).
 - IV. Mounting Environmental Devastation.
 - V. The West, Consumer Goods, the Arms Race and the Economy.
 - VI. The Social Contract: Marriage, abortions, alcoholism, labour productivity, and decline in life expectancy.
 - VII. An Aging Leadership (and why no new leaders emerged in the 1970s).
- Brezhnev departs, 10 November 1982.
 - Mikhail Suzlov departs, 25 January 1982 (the most important Commie you've never heard of).
 - Interregnum, 1982-1985: Andropov, and Chernenko; then a massive shift.

Part II:

Living in Leningrad, 1987-1988:

Mary C. Friesen and life in the USSR during the Gorbachev Revolution (A Personal Reflection)

This will be Mary's first opportunity in decades to reflect on her experience of living in the USSR during the Gorbachev years. As part of it Mary has pulled together a photographic essay from photo slides taken at that time. She will show them to the audience, with commentary.

Part III:

From Perestroika to Glasnost to Collapse The Gorbachev Era, 1985-1991

- Gorbachev: who was he and where did he come from?
- Stage One: Promises and Discipline under *Perestroika*, 1985-1986
- State Two: *Glasnost'* Unleashed, 1986-1988
- State Three: The Soviet Union Unravels, 1989-1991

Sources?

Moshe Lewin, *The Gorbachev Phenomenon*.

Steven Rosefielde and Stefan Hedlund, *Russia Since 1980*.

Daniel Treisman, *The Return: Russia's Journey from Gorbachev to Medvedev*.

Repentance (A Soviet film, available free online, 1987).