

International Diplomacy

*Contemporary United States
(1968–Present)*



Realpolitik

The Middle East

End of the Cold War

Thematic Icons



Economics and business



Geography and environment



Historical concepts and questions



Politics, government and citizenship



Society and culture



War, diplomacy and foreign policy

Icons: For more detailed instructions, see the *User Guide*



Flash activity (these activities are not editable)



Teacher notes included in the Notes page



By the end of this section, you will learn about the end of the Cold War and be able to answer these key questions:

- What was Ronald Reagan's attitude to the Cold War?
- How did Reagan pursue a rollback strategy around the world?
- What internal changes were made in the Soviet Union and how did they lead to its collapse?



Ronald Reagan took office in 1981, after winning a landslide presidential election. He vowed to win the Cold War and adopted a strategy of **rollback** – forcing change within the policies and outlook of a foreign country.

“The Soviet Union is an Evil Empire, and Soviet communism is the focus of evil in the modern world.”

Détente had ended with Carter. Instead, Reagan increased the **arms race** and created a renewed image of U.S. power on a global scale.



Why did the U.S. change to a new strategy?



President Reagan changed the dynamic of the Cold War in the 1980s. He aimed to win it, replacing a decade of détente with an aggressive strategy of rollback and a renewed arms race.

Press on the buttons to find out more about Reagan's foreign policy.

Press **start** to begin.

start





Intervention in Latin America



As part of the Reagan Doctrine and the strategy of rollback, the U.S. was heavily involved in affairs in Latin America during the 1980s in order to fight communism.

Drag each country to the correct location on the map. Press the information buttons to find out about U.S. intervention in each country.

Press **start** to begin.

start





Reagan's presidency was shaken by the revelation of a large political scandal in 1986, the **Iran-Contra affair**.

Watch this animation to find out more about the scandal.

Press **start** to begin.

start





In 1985, **Mikhail Gorbachev** was elected General Secretary of the Communist Party and became the Soviet Union leader. In 1986, he implemented three key new policies:

glasnost – more openness in the exchange of information

demokratizatsiya
– an expansion of voting opportunities in the Soviet Union



perestroika – a restructuring of the economy, allowing for limited private ownership

How did these policies change the Soviet Union?

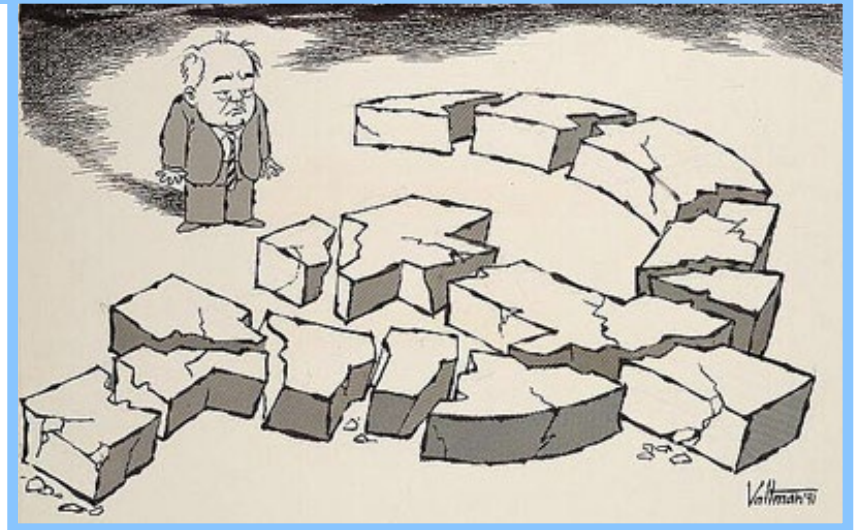


Why internal changes?

Gorbachev was forced to make changes because the Soviet Union was struggling. The Soviet economy was failing due to the military buildup pushed by Reagan through the 1980s.

Over 25% of the nation's **Gross National Product (GNP)** was devoted to the military. Other industries suffered as a result, leading to severe shortages of even basic necessities.

Gorbachev realized that reforms were necessary to restructure economics and politics. While his policies were successful, they also had unintended consequences.



What does the cartoon suggest about the changes?



The U.S. acknowledged the Soviet Union's changes, viewing them as positives but remaining skeptical. In a move towards détente, Reagan and Gorbachev then met four times from 1985 to 1988 to talk policy and reduce the arms race. Reagan also challenged Gorbachev to go further with his reforms.

“General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace... come here to this gate. Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate. Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!”



Why did Reagan change his attitude and policy towards the Soviet Union after 1985?



Revolution in Europe



In 1989, peaceful rebellions took place throughout Eastern Europe, overthrowing their communist governments. The Soviet Union was unable and unwilling to use military strength to maintain their satellite states.

Can you match the countries to the methods by which the communist governments were replaced?

Press **start** to begin.

start



Did these events signal the end of the Cold War?



Fall of the Berlin Wall

The Berlin Wall, a symbol of Soviet dominance in Eastern Europe and the Cold War for almost 30 years, was torn down on November 9, 1989.

East Berliners were able to walk freely into West Berlin for the first time in decades and East Germany opened its borders to anyone.



The fall of the Berlin Wall paved the way for German reunification. In May, 1990, East and West Germany were reunified for the first time since 1946. Helmut Kohl became the first Chancellor of the reunited Germany.



Following the internal reforms and the loss of its Eastern European satellite states, the Soviet Union was struggling to cope with the changes. Individual republics began to declare independence and national **sovereignty**.



In June 1991, **Boris Yeltsin** was elected President of Russia. He banned the Communist Party and undermined Gorbachev, limiting his power.

On December 21, 1991, under pressure from individual republics, especially Russia, Gorbachev was forced to resign. This dissolved the Soviet Union and ended the Cold War.

How did the end of the Cold War affect the U.S.?



How was the Cold War won?



The Cold War ended in 1991 after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. This left the U.S. as the world's dominant power.



The U.S. won the Cold War because the Soviet Union could not keep up in the arms race in the 1980s.

The Cold War ended due to the internal reforms in the Soviet Union leading to the system collapsing.



Which opinion do you agree with more?



Test your knowledge of American foreign policy in the 1970s and 1980s with this quiz. Choose the correct answer to each question to see how much you can remember about U.S. policy in the 1970s and 1980s.

Press **start** to begin.

start





Test your understanding of the American foreign policy in the 1970s and 1980s by recapping key terms and important people using this glossary.

Press on the tabs and then each term to see a definition.

Press **start** to begin.

start

