

US History The Cold War - B

Learning Target:

I can analyze the relationship between Reagan and Gorbachev to determine how the Cold War ended and the role each played in that process.

6. Ronald Reagan & Mikhail Gorbachev

Ronald Reagan (1st Term: 1981 – 1985) –

- Believed a massive build up in arms would win the Cold War
- Took a very hard-line approach with the Soviet Union
- 1981 – 1985: The Pentagon budget grew from \$150 billion to \$250 billion due to increased nuclear weapons production

Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) –

- A space based missile defense system
- Became labeled “Star Wars” by its critics
- Reagan argued it was a weapon of peace
- Cost extreme amounts of money to research

Growing Cold War Tension –

- Tension between the two superpowers continued after Afghanistan
 - 1983 – Soviets shot down a Korean airliner with many Americans aboard
 - 1984 – USSR boycott the Olympics in LA due to nuclear weapons in Europe

Mikhail Gorbachev –

-1985 – Mikhail Gorbachev ushers in a new era of Soviet history

-Soviet problems faced by Gorbachev:

1. Failing economy
2. Repressive political system
3. Heavy military costs

-Solutions proposed by Gorbachev:

1. *Glasnost* –
 - Policy of openness that promised more freedom for Soviet citizens
2. *Perestroika* –
 - Plan to restructure the Soviet economy and government by increasing foreign trade and reducing military spending
 - Example of capitalistic democratic changes

Ronald Reagan (2nd Term: 1985 – 1989) –

- Reagan recognized the shifting in the leadership of the Soviets with Gorbachev
- Switched from a hard-line approach to a more diplomatic approach with the Soviets

-Gorbachev and Reagan met in four global summits to discuss arms reductions

Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty –

- Eliminated all medium-range nuclear weapons from Europe

Conclusions –

-The role of Ronald Reagan in ending the Cold War is a highly debated topic:

- Some believe his increased spending and rhetoric caused the Soviet Union to collapse
- Others believe the reform-minded Gorbachev played a more significant role