

Into the 21st century, 1980–2000

The final two decades of the 20th century began with few indications of the changes that would occur during those years. In 1980, Ronald Reagan was elected president of the United States to usher in a period of conservatism and reassuring calm differing from the tumultuous previous two decades. The world still seemed to be divided between the USSR and the USA. In Latin America, autocratic regimes were solidifying their power, economies underwent significant changes, and civil wars raged in several countries. If one looked beyond the news headlines, however, changes were underway. The personal computer was already on the market and voices of democracy were already being heard in city squares in South America. In a short 20 years, democratic institutions would flourish across Latin America, the cell phone would change the idea of calling a place to calling a person, using the World Wide Web and sending email would become commonplace. People would talk of “shopping on line.” Globalization would become a word of progress, exploitation, and polarization. The Soviet Union disappeared. AIDS and climate change became major concerns in the region and around the globe. It was a time of great change.

This chapter looks at a number of major events, developments, and people during those two decades. The political, economic, technological, cultural, and social changes of the period and region were, in some important ways, both evolutionary and revolutionary. Students reading this chapter should keep in mind the concepts of continuity and change, and cause and effect, to understand the historical processes at work in the 1980s and 1990s.

By the end of this chapter, students should be able to:

- explain the effects of the United States becoming the world's sole superpower
- show an understanding of the similarities, differences, and effects (both at home and in the region) of the domestic and foreign policies of US presidents Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and Bill Clinton
- explain the causes and evaluate the success of the transition from authoritarian to democratic governments in Perú, Argentina, Uruguay, and Brazil
- be able to discuss and evaluate developments in the United States in terms of:
 - technological developments and their impact on society and politics
 - globalization, political, economic and cultural aspects
 - concerns about HIV/AIDS, climate change, and other important health and environmental issues
 - consistency and changes in popular culture, including music, film, literature, and other forms of entertainment.

The domestic and foreign policies of Reagan, Bush and Clinton

The last two decades of the 20th century hosted three American presidencies: those of Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, and Bill Clinton. In his presidential inauguration speech, January 1981, Reagan announced that, "government is not the solution to our problem; government is the problem," becoming the embodiment of the anti-government politician. Reagan's domestic goals of shrinking both taxes and the size of the government to stimulate the economy contrasted with his desire to rapidly expand the military and present a robust and aggressive anti-communist foreign policy to the world. This two-pronged set of policy directions became known as the Reagan Revolution. During the eight-year Reagan presidency, taxes were lowered and raised, the overall size of the government did not shrink, the military grew, the United States was involved in military and covert action from Lebanon to the Caribbean island of Grenada, Nicaragua and its neighbors and negotiations took place between Reagan and the last leader of the USSR, Mikhail Gorbachev. Yet, by the end of Reagan's two terms he left office as one of America's most popular presidents.

Riding to office on Ronald Reagan's popularity was his vice president, George Bush, a man of vast governmental experience, including ambassador, CIA director, and senator, a member of the Washington establishment, the opposite of Reagan's outsider appeal. Bush ran for office as a kinder, gentler president who would continue his predecessor's policies, but with a more compassionate outlook. When running for president, Bush proclaimed, "Read my lips: no new taxes," a pledge eventually abandoned under the continuing growth of the deficit. More environment-friendly than his predecessor, Bush's domestic achievements included a strengthened Clean Air Act, and civil rights legislation. On the foreign policy front, Bush ordered an invasion of Panama to seize the dictator of that country on drug charges, created and led an international coalition of armed forces to oppose Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, and presided over the United States' response to the breakup of the Soviet Bloc and the dissolving of the USSR into many separate nations. Faced by a recession near the end of his term, President Bush's foreign policy achievements were disregarded by a disillusioned US electorate. Bill Clinton, the first baby-boomer candidate, and the first since Franklin Roosevelt to not have served in the military, broke rank with the experience of previous presidents.

Bill Clinton ran for president portraying the occupant of the White House as out of touch with the people of the United States. Focusing on the economy, the youthful Clinton entered the presidency in January 1993 overflowing with progressive ideas: healthcare, gays in the military, fixes for the economy and many more domestic initiatives. Over the course of his presidency, many of the initiatives faded or failed, some failures due, in large part, to Clinton's personal troubles that ended with him being only the

second US president to be impeached, but spared conviction by the Senate. Clinton successfully lowered the ongoing budget deficit through tax hikes and economic growth, spurred by the "dot-com" boom. His political strategies led to seeking a middle ground in legislation, eventually declaring in a Reaganesque way that the era of big government was over. While not originally focused on the outside world, Clinton had to deal with foreign policy issues including involvement in Somalia, a coalition with NATO for military action against Serbia, an AIDS initiative in Africa, and peace talks to end the Serb-Bosnian conflict. Despite his personal travails and almost being removed from office, President Clinton left office in January 2001 as a popular president.

The Reagan years: January 1981 – January 1989

Activity

Note-taking for US presidents

Organize your notes as you take them. Create a simple Presidential Policies Table as below. The three column chart can be drawn in a notebook and expanded as needed. Create a different table for each president. This type of table allows for policy narratives or analysis.

Ronald Reagan: Policies		
Domestic policy	Foreign policy	Comments
		Include your own observations, questions for further research, items that relate to prior study, etc.

Alternatively, create two different tables, one for domestic policy and one for foreign policy:

Foreign policy			
Reagan	Bush	Clinton	Comments

This table allows for comparison and contrast between presidents, as well as narratives and analysis. More information is packed into a confined space, but may be too crowded for some students.

Ronald Reagan entered office after the troubled presidency of Jimmy Carter. Blessed with an optimistic air and fine communication skills honed in acting in many Hollywood films, Reagan projected confidence to a hopeful electorate.

Domestic policies: actions and results

Ronald Reagan began his presidency with four major goals: to revitalize the stagnant economy, lower taxes, balance the budget, and reduce the size and scope of the federal government. Within a couple months, Reagan proposed a series of economic measures that, as a whole, came to be known as Reaganomics. Reagan followed a theory of **supply-side economics**. The premise of supply-side economics is



Ronald Reagan was called "The Great Communicator." Press conferences were often contentious, but Reagan projected friendliness appearing to enjoy the give and take.

Ronald Wilson Reagan (1911–2004)

When Ronald Reagan entered the White House on January 20, 1981, less than two weeks short of his 70th birthday, he became the oldest man ever elected to the presidency. Born in 1911 in the town of Tampico, Illinois, Reagan grew up in modest circumstances in the Midwest, attending Eureka College 1928–32 on a needs-based scholarship. In addition to pursuing a BA in social science and economics, “Dutch” as he was known in college, played football and acted in drama productions. After graduating, Reagan became a sports announcer, a job he recalled fondly, telling of creating play-by-play broadcasts from teletypes of sports events. He accepted a movie studio contract in 1937 after a screen test. He acquired his second nickname “The Gipper” after playing the role of George Gipp in the film *Knute Rockne, All American*. In 1940, he married actress Jane Wyman. In 1942, after several years in the army reserves, Reagan began active duty, serving most of his time in a motion picture unit, and was discharged at the end of 1945. After leaving the army, Reagan resumed his acting career, and became president of the Screen Actors Guild (SAG) in 1947. While SAG president, Reagan became involved in disputes over communists within the film industry with the effect that he shifted from being a political liberal to a conservative. His first marriage ended in 1949, and in 1952 Reagan married Nancy Davis who became an important force in his political career. During the 1950s Reagan was an advocate of conservative causes, and in 1966 he was elected governor of California, defeating “Pat” Brown, the man who had defeated Richard Nixon four years before. Reagan served two terms as governor, increasing his national exposure and popularity. After attempting to win the Republican Party’s nomination for president twice previously, he won the nomination in 1980. Reagan served two terms as president of the United States, becoming known for his congenial nature and his conservative policies. After leaving office, Reagan endorsed several causes including the line-item veto and gun control. In 1994 Reagan wrote an open letter to the nation that he had been diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease, sparking some discussion over whether it had affected his presidency. Those close to the former president strongly denied the speculation. Reagan died in 2004 in Bel Air, California.

that by taxing the wealthy and businesses less, they will invest more capital (money). These investments will stimulate productivity, growth and employment, with a growing GDP stimulating greater economic gains for all. Opponents called it “trickle-down” economics. Within weeks of his inauguration Reagan proposed a 30% income tax cut over three years and, according to the *New York Times* (February 5, 1981), “The White House has informed members of Congress that it is aiming for a reduction of \$40 billion to \$50 billion in the federal budget for the fiscal year 1982, making cuts in virtually every major federal endeavor except the military” The result was a budget cut of about 6%, and increased military spending of approximately 12%. The proposals would reduce government funding for welfare programs and increase private wealth for capital investment, thus stimulating the economy while reducing the size of government.

Supply-side economics is the theory that it is supply that promotes demand and drives the economy. By lowering tax rates on higher incomes and investment, the government does not discourage capital investment. Investment drives the economy.

Reagan's supply-side program was partly based on the Laffer curve: the idea that increased tax revenues could occur with a decrease in tax rates. As Reagan stated on April 29, 1982, in a speech to the nation, "high taxes, destroying incentive, had contributed to reduced productivity and a reduction in savings, which left us without the capital we needed for industrial expansion." In other words, if taxes on income and investment are lowered, people will work harder and take more capital risks, leading to a much greater GDP. In turn, this would lead to increased tax revenues with decreased individual rates. The Reagan administration assumption that lowering tax rates would increase revenues was based on the belief that tax rates were so high that they discouraged working and investment.

In March 1981, the president was shot by John Hinckley, a mentally ill man who thought that he could win actress Jodie Foster's affections by killing Reagan, seemingly confusing Foster's role in the movie, *Taxi Driver*, with real life. Reagan, more badly wounded than he knew and dealing with the trauma with humor, became more popular. When he returned to the White House, his increased popularity helped to push his economic package through Congress—run by a Democrat, Speaker Tip O'Neil. The tax cuts were 25% over three years, not 30%, and the budget didn't cut spending as much as Reagan desired either. It did cut programs to the poor. But the first year was the only year that Reagan would cut taxes. A number of times in the next seven years taxes were raised—1982, 1984, and 1986—all three packaged as tax reform. The taxation rate did not, however, rise close to the rates they were when he took office.

Reaganomics were intended to grow the economy and, in doing so, reduce unemployment. In the quarter preceding Reagan's presidency the GDP grew by 7.6% and in the first quarter of the year, before any budget bills were passed, the economy grew by another 8.2% annual rate. Then the GDP averaged about 1% growth over the next six months, but had two consecutive quarters of over 5% negative growth—the definition of a recession. For the rest of 1982 the economy stagnated, but in 1983 the economy grew by almost 5%, followed by 7.2% growth for 1984. For the rest of Reagan's presidency the GDP grew by a modest 3 to 4%. Based on the GDP data, after the Reagan tax cut took effect, the economy did grow continuously. This was reflected in rising public approval for the president.

However, while the economy grew, unemployment did too. When Reagan took office, 7.5% of workers were unemployed—a disturbingly high figure that went back to May of 1980. During the recession of late 1981 and early 1982 unemployment rose by a little over 1% percent, but kept rising even after the economy began to grow. By September, unemployment had reached the 10% mark and by the end of 1982 was at 11%. Unemployment stayed above 10%

Discussion point

Laffer and Reaganomics

Arthur Laffer, an economist whose ideas influenced Reagan's economic policies, explained how his view of tax rates and revenue:

At a tax rate of 0 percent, the government would collect no tax revenues, no matter how large the tax base. Likewise, at a tax rate of 100 percent, the government would also collect no tax revenues because no one would willingly work for an after-tax wage of zero (i.e., there would be no tax base). Between these two extremes there are two tax rates that will collect the same amount of revenue: a high tax rate on a small tax base and a low tax rate on a large tax base.

Source: Laffer, Arthur. "The Laffer Curve: Past, Present and Future." *The Heritage Foundation*. June 1, 2004. <http://www.heritage.org/Research/Reports/2004/06/The-Laffer-Curve-Past-Present-and-Future>.

Questions

- 1 How can Laffer's explanation be used to justify lowering tax rates?
- 2 For what reasons did Ronald Reagan want to lower taxes? Was maximizing revenue one of the justifications? (For further reference, see Reagan's first inaugural address at <http://millercenter.org/scripps/archive/speeches/detail/3407>.)

Discussion point

The standard definition of a recession is two consecutive quarters of negative growth. Should consideration of other economic factors be part of the definition?



How would you define a recession?

until July of 1983, but did not drop below the 7.5% mark until May 1984. Unemployment continued to drop, interrupted by an occasional minor rise throughout the rest of the Reagan years. Employment growth usually lags behind economic growth, but there was a long period of higher than normal unemployment.

While Reagan pursued his economic agenda, the Federal Reserve Bank tried to bring down the inflation that had plagued the last two years of the Carter administration, reaching above 13% in 1980. Keeping interest rates high, bank chairman Paul Volcker limited the money supply by making borrowing much more expensive, causing grief to farmers, small businesses and much of the middle class. However painful it might be, Reagan supported the Federal Bank's monetary policies, believing that for the economy to grow and investments to be more profitable inflation had to drop significantly. Inflation plummeted to 3% by 1983 and hovered in the 3–4% range for most of his presidency.

The views as to whether Reaganomics promoted economic growth are mixed. Some economists argue that the growth was a normal part of the economic cycle, while others claim that the lowered taxes stimulated a faster, longer, and more vibrant period of economic growth. A third view is that Reagan practiced **Keynesian policies** despite proposing to shrink government. Government spending increased each year, and the gross federal debt soared from 33% of GDP in 1980 to 52% in 1988. Over the eight years 1.6 trillion dollars in deficit spending was injected into the economy. Another factor in the evaluation of Reaganomics is the fact that wages did rise for the lowest quarter of earners, but the wage gap with higher earners increased considerably. Regardless of the view of Reagan's economic programs, the economy did grow.

A significant problem facing the United States during the Reagan years was the Social Security System, which was becoming financially unsound. **Social Security**, known as the “**third rail**” of US politics, was close to impossible for either Congress or the executive to reform. In the United States, the elderly turn out for elections in much higher percentages than voters in their 20s. This makes any changes to Social Security potential political suicide. In this case, Reagan reached across the aisle to the Speaker of the House, Thomas “Tip” O’Neil, a Democrat, to form a commission. The commission came up with a package that assured the viability of the system for decades by raising payroll contributions and the retirement age, and also taxing benefits for the more wealthy. The bill was signed into law in the spring of 1983.

Noneconomic Issues

Labor relations

Despite being the former president of the Screen Actors Guild, Reagan was not a friend of labor. Most labor unions had opposed his election, fearing that Reagan as president would work to enable business owners and enfeeble unions. Early on in his presidency, one of the few unions to support his election went on strike: 12,000 members of PATCO, the air traffic controllers union took action illegally. Reagan fired the striking controllers, filling in the gaps with the few who did not strike, including those in management and

Discussion point

Economies have cycles, as do presidential terms. US presidents often claim, and are assigned responsibility for, improving or harming the economy.



Examining other time periods and places, how much influence have national policies had on economic cycles?

The British economist **John Maynard Keynes** favored demand-based economic policies. As an economy slowed the government could speed up the economy by putting money in, thus increasing demand. Conversely, the government could act to take money out of the economy to ease demand and inflation.

Social Security An income security program, designed primarily to provide financial support for senior citizens. It began as part of the New Deal.

The **Third Rail** is a metaphor referring to the electric rail of a train. In politics, it means that the topic is so charged with importance to a significant part of the electorate that an elected official addressing the topic is taking a huge political risk, possibly leading to being voted out of office.

many new appointments made. Despite fears that flying would be unsafe, the airlines continued to function and the feared accidents did not occur. The dismissals sent a message that the administration would, indeed, be less friendly to unions and emboldened corporations to negotiate from a position of power.

7 • The domestic and foreign policies of Reagan, Bush and Clinton

Activity

Reagonomics

The following sources discuss Ronald Reagan's economic policies.

Source A

"They've all sold out, every one of them." That dour assessment came from Jude Wanniski, a fanatic believer in supply-side economics, after a visit to the White House last week. By "they" he meant members of the President's economic team, who in Wanniski's zealous view have all but abandoned supply-side theory—one of the basic Doctrines of Reagonomics.

The economic religion preached by Ronald Reagan has always accommodated the beliefs of two different sects. On one side of the aisle sit the supply-siders, who believe that by slashing taxes Washington can stimulate economic growth: on the other side sit the monetarists, who believe that Washington can slow the inflation rate by tightening the nation's money supply. Now, nagged by persistently high interest rates and the threat of a recession, this uneasy choir of Reagan's economic experts is no longer singing as if with one voice, and the cacophony can be heard from Wall Street to Capitol Hill. True believers in Reagonomics, of course, can justifiably argue that their religion is not a failure, since its trial has only just begun.

Source: Beckwith, David et al. "Reagonomics: Too Many Voices." *Time*. October 19, 1981. <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,924952,00.html>.

Source B

The president's persistence paid off in July when Congress passed slightly modified tax and budget bill. Reagan signed both into law on August 13. The tax law ... called for a 23 percent cut in federal income taxes over the next three years. It reduced the top marginal rate on individuals from 70 percent to 50 percent, and it cut rates in lower tax brackets. The administration estimated that the reductions would amount to \$750 billion—an enormous sum—over the next five years. The budget bill, along with the new regulations that his appointees put into place, gave Reagan many of the cuts in domestic spending—in public assistance, food stamps, and other means-tested programs for the poor—for which he had campaigned.

Source: Patterson, James T. 2005. *Restless Giant: The United States from Watergate to Bush vs. Gore*. Oxford University Press.

Source C

... recession convinced many people, including some conservatives, the Reagan economic program (and thus the Reagan presidency) had failed. In fact, however, the economy recovered more rapidly and impressively than anyone had expected. By late 1983, unemployment had fallen to 8.2 percent, and it declined steadily for several years after that. The gross national product had grown 3.6 percent in a year, the largest increase since the mid 1970s. Inflation had fallen below 5 percent.

Source: Brinkley, Alan. 1999. *American History: A Survey*. 10th edn. Boston: McGraw Hill. p. 1119.



←
Source D



"President's car hit by 'projectile!'" by Nicholas Garland, first published in the *Daily Telegraph*, February 4, 1982.

Questions

- 1 What does Alan Brinkley (source C) mean by the phrase "the Reagan economic program"?
- 2 What is the message of source D?
- 3 Compare and contrast the views of sources A and B in evaluating the success of Reagan's economic program.
- 4 With reference to their origin and purpose, evaluate the value and limitations of sources A and C to historians studying Ronald Reagan's economic policies.
- 5 Using these sources and your own knowledge, evaluate the short- and long-term success of Ronald Reagan at implementing his economic program.

Regulations

Another way Reagan wanted to reduce the size of government was to reduce regulations. He felt that the government should be less involved in how people lived and worked. Interestingly, the Carter administration had already deregulated the airlines, trucking, railroads and the financial industries. Major emphasis on deregulation went into the environment and business areas. A look at his environmental and business regulation and enforcement record reveals a mixture of goals and achievements with uneven results. His administration had more success in slowing down the issuing of new regulations than in eliminating existing ones. He did manage to deregulate rules regarding corporate mergers, effectively lessening government anti-monopoly efforts. Many of his other efforts were thwarted by a less than cooperative House of Representatives.

Reagan has been viewed by many as an enemy of environmental protection. His administration made a consistent effort to deregulate or limit the enforcement of existing laws and regulations. Due to lawsuits and congressional action many of these efforts were unsuccessful. For example, he vetoed a renewal of the Clean Water Act in 1987, but was overridden by the House and Senate. But, in Reagan's first year there was more than a two-thirds reduction in the filing of EPA enforcement cases. Additionally, he stopped President Carter's efforts at promoting renewable energy, removing the solar cells from the White House roof and dropping car fleet mileage reductions as well. The administration opened many federal lands to timber harvesting and mining. Personnel changes, mismanagement and a degree of stalemate moderated some

Activity

Choose another country in the Americas. Compare and contrast the activities and influence of labor unions in:

- commercial activities
- government policies.

Activity**Social cost**

The total cost of any economic activity is the "Social Cost." The social cost is comprised of private costs and external costs ($SC=PC+EC$). One view of regulations is that they attempt to turn external costs into private costs, resulting in a more realistic price for any given economic activity. Others argue that regulations unreasonably raise the cost of commerce by burdening businesses beyond the external costs. By what standards, do you think, governments should regulate business activities? Consider these issues and questions in the following case study:

Compare and contrast environmental, financial, or labor regulations of two different countries in the Americas during the 1980s and 1990s. To what extent did the regulations achieve their goals, and to what extent did they cause the harm that opponents predicted?

of these effects, with many of the laws, agencies and public lands surviving the Reagan years mostly intact. Some conservatives are critical of Reagan's record as a lost opportunity to undo the damage of previous administrations, but others argue that he expanded federal wilderness areas by more than 10 million acres and led the international campaign to eliminate ozone damage, resulting in the **Montreal Protocol** of 1987. Additionally, he did sign a number of bills such as amendments strengthening the Safe Water Drinking Act and amendments increasing funding for the Superfund hazardous sites clean-up program. Overall, Ronald Reagan's record on the environment contains efforts consistent with his philosophy of smaller government.

There were a number of other domestic actions by the Reagan administration: the War on Drugs; placing the first woman, Sandra Day O'Connor, on the Supreme Court; and a confused policy on HIV/AIDS that finally resulted in funds for AIDS research. Reagan's approach to further advancement in civil rights was otherwise consistent with the small government approach. He opposed the renewal of the Voting Rights Act, busing for achieving school integration, and affirmative action in employment. Many civil rights leaders claimed that the president was hostile to minority groups, or at best indifferent to their needs. Reagan disagreed, but civil rights were not a focus of the administration.

Activity**Understanding terminology**

Reagan's domestic policies were called conservative. Research the terms conservative and liberal as used in the United States. The terms right and left can also describe political position. Political tendencies can also range from libertarian or authoritarian. Identify your own political leanings by taking a political test. One political spectrum test is at <http://www.gotoquiz.com/politics/political-spectrum-quiz.html>; while another is available at www.politicalcompass.org/test (The websites are not endorsed). Or, just do an Internet search for "political typology."

Montreal Protocol A 1987 treaty signed by most nations to reduce the emissions of chemicals that cause the depletion of the ozone layer in the atmosphere. The effort has been largely successful.

TOK Link
Ideology

Presidents are often viewed in terms of faithfulness to a particular ideology. To what extent is pragmatism an ideology? How does pragmatism work in political decision-making? Does pragmatism preclude political ideology?



Was Reagan an ideologue or a pragmatist?

Foreign policies

Ronald Reagan's entry into the White House followed a period in which many people in the United States perceived a significant fall in the international standing of their country. The loss of Vietnam to communism, the 444-day Iranian Hostage Crisis, the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan, and the inability of the Nixon or Carter administrations to deal with the oil crises of 1973 and 1979 or with the increasing power of OPEC, only served as evidence that the United States was declining in power and its enemies, including the Soviet Union, on the rise. Central American countries, including El Salvador, with a strong communist themed insurgency and Nicaragua, with a communist government brought the threat of communism close to home. Reagan, believed in **American Exceptionalism** and that the United States was on earth to rid the world of the "Evil Empire." Reagan, projecting the reasoning behind NSC-68 that Moscow was the root of all communist aggression wherever it appeared, stated that communism had to be opposed everywhere it materialized around the globe. The foreign policy ventures of Reagan also dealt with arms control and the Middle East. While Reagan is remembered as a fierce anti-communist, the actions of his administration are quite varied.

American Exceptionalism

While the term was first used by Alexis de Tocqueville, to many Americans it came to mean that the United States was fundamentally different from all other nations as a "bastion of freedom" uniquely blessed by a distinct national character to pursue liberty and material abundance.

Activity

Emotive phrases and national image

In his first Inaugural Address Reagan used the phrase "last and greatest bastion of freedom" to describe the United States. In his farewell address Reagan described the US as "a shining city on a hill." Read through the inaugural address of Reagan, Bush, and Clinton and identify phrases that reinforce the concept of American Exceptionalism.

The USSR and the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)

For decades Ronald Reagan had believed that the Soviet Union was the "Evil Empire," a phrase he mouthed publicly in 1983. He strongly distrusted the leadership and assumed their motives were bent on world communist domination. Every indication that the Soviets were violating arms treaties was another reason to read aggression into each action. Acknowledging the effectiveness of **containment**, he was severely disillusioned with the policy of **détente** that had been Nixon's, Ford's and Carter's. Reagan believed that the Soviets had taken advantage of the easing of pressure to greatly increase their military power and influence around the globe. He also believed that the ascendancy of the USSR meant the descent of the United States and the West: that was a state of affairs he could not let stand.

From the beginning of his presidency Reagan adopted a policy of a massive arms buildup, including a large expansion of the United States Navy to project US power. The idea was to force the Soviet Union into economic collapse. Contrary to intelligence estimates which in retrospect overestimated the strength of the Soviet economy, the president believed that the USSR was in precarious shape. Defense spending had already increased steadily under Jimmy Carter, \$102 billion in 1978 (the first year his budgets took effect) to \$154 billion in 1981 (the last effective year of Carter budgets). The 50% increase was

Containment Truman's Cold War policy for not allowing communism to spread beyond the current countries.

Détente Nixon's policy of engaging the Soviet Union and China to lower tensions to lower the threat of war, especially nuclear war.

significant. In Reagan's first four years the US defense budget grew to \$245 billion, a 60% increase in spending. Part of the buildup was research into a missile defense system: the Strategic Defense Initiative. SDI, nicknamed **Star Wars** by opponents or doubters, was the idea for a space-based system that would shoot down incoming intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs) in space, creating a defensive umbrella over the United States and allies, rendering the Soviet nuclear threat largely impotent. SDI was only under preliminary research during the Reagan years, but played an important role in arms reduction negotiations between Reagan and Soviet leader, Mikhail Gorbachev.

Confrontation, engagement and arms talks

For the first four years of the Reagan administration, relations with the USSR were tense at best. Beginning shortly after taking office, the announcement of the largest peacetime arms buildup in the history of the United States was announced. Secretly, the military initiated a **PSYOP** operation. The operation, known to very few people in the administration and the Pentagon, mostly consisted of military flights close to the Soviet border or the launching of bombers, testing how the Soviets would react. According to the CIA, the purpose was two-fold: to probe for Soviet defense vulnerabilities and to keep the Kremlin guessing as to what the United States would do, ultimately producing an uneasy Soviet defense establishment. The USSR maintained an outer calm and moderate rhetoric in response to the provocations for the first two years. But to the USSR, the proposed SDI of 1983 was a threat to stability, rendering the strategy of mutually assured destruction (**MAD**) precarious. The Soviets contemplated the increasing possibility of a US or NATO attack. Yuri Andropov responded several days later publicly accusing the United States of preparing a first strike attack, claiming that President Reagan was preparing to start a nuclear war "with the hope of winning it."

PSYOP probes caused deep concern and a heightened alert in the Kremlin. On September 1, a Soviet jet fighter shot down Korean Airline Flight 007, a Boeing 747, killing all 269 people on board. The plane had strayed into Soviet airspace in the vicinity of a US spy plane that had been probing Soviet Air defenses. The Reagan Administration referred to it as deliberate murder, but the US air force wanted the president to hold off on a statement, and eventually intelligence concluded that it was probably a case of mistaken identity and was not premeditated. The USSR insisted that the downed airliner was the United States intelligence platform and not a civilian plane. Historian Richard Rhodes in his book *Arsenals of Folly* and the Fischer report concur that the Soviet military action was likely in response to the PSYOP operation that kept the Soviet air defenses on edge with ever-increasing anxiety.

Tensions continued to grow. Reagan expanded the military and deployed more nuclear missiles in Europe, but he also wanted to rid the world of nuclear weapons. Reagan wanted more than SALT, he wanted to reduce the threat of nuclear war by reducing weapons. Reagan made some moves to bring negotiations back. In 1981, he reversed the Carter wheat embargo imposed after the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. In 1982 negotiations

Star Wars was a popular science fiction film released in 1977. The implication was that Reagan was living in a fantasy world where such weapons were only possible.

Discussion point

Dr Strangelove, a character in Stanley Kubrick's 1964 film of the same name, said, "Deterrence is the art of producing in the mind of the enemy ... the fear to attack."

- 1 How would SDI, if successfully deployed, alter the USSR's nuclear deterrence?
- 2 Inventors of various weapons have hoped that their invention would create such severe damage that the weapon would prove a deterrent to war, yet the 20th century produced the most deadly wars in history.

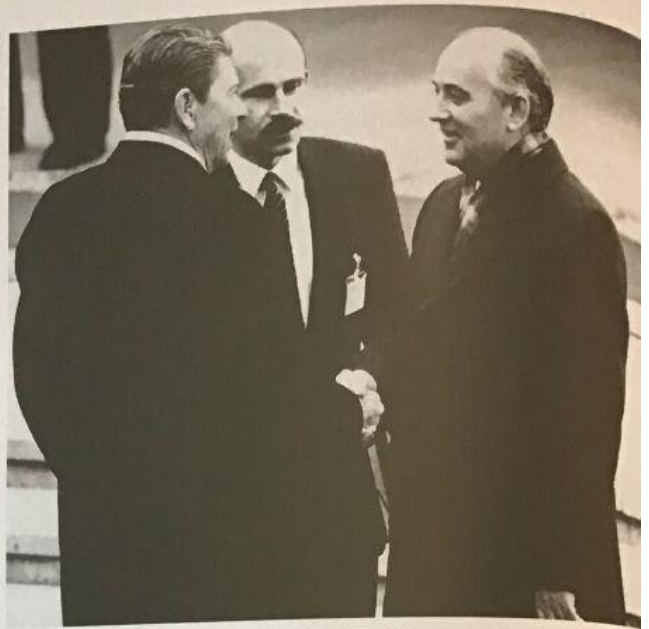


Is the nuclear deterrent fundamentally different? Why or why not?

PSYOP stands for psychological warfare. Related terms include Psychological warfare (PSYWAR), Psy Ops, Political Warfare, and tactics associated with the phrase "Hearts and Minds." The principle behind such operations is the desire to influence a target audience's value systems and beliefs in order to have an impact on individual and group behavior.

MAD is short for Mutually Assured Destruction, the default nuclear strategy that evolved during the 1960s between the USSR and the US. If both nations possessed sufficient nuclear weapons to destroy each other, even if attacked, then neither side would initiate a strike.

were restarted, but quick changes in Soviet leadership— from Leonid Brezhnev to Yuri Andropov followed by Konstantin Chernenko (who assumed the helm after the death of Andropov in 1984)—all combined to deter negotiations. The Reagan foreign policy team headed by Secretary of State George Schultz met with longtime Soviet ambassador Anatoly Dobrynin in January 1984 to attempt to restart negotiations. Andropov died the next month and Chernenko followed, but appeared to be more willing to engage the United States. In March 1984, Chernenko, the last of the Soviet old guard, died and Mikhail Gorbachev, a protégé of Andropov and the only Soviet leader to be born after the Russian Revolution, became the General Secretary. After British prime minister Margaret Thatcher told Reagan that the new Soviet leader might be amenable to serious negotiations, he sent a letter proposing a meeting. Gorbachev, who believed that the Soviet economy needed restructuring and desired lower defense expenditures, responded affirmatively, and the two leaders met in Geneva in November 1985. Talks started off well as the two leaders agreed to seek a 50% reduction in strategic weapons, but no agreement was signed because SDI emerged as a sticking point with Gorbachev wanting to observe the traditional Antiballistic Missile Treaty interpretation.



Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan in Geneva.

Activity

Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI)

Source A

March 27, 1983, Soviet Premier Andropov stated in an interview published in *Pravda* that SDI:

would open the floodgates of a runaway race of all types of strategic arms, both offensive and defensive. Such is the real significance, the seamy side, so to say, of Washington's "defensive conception." ... The Soviet Union will never be caught defenseless by any threat.... Engaging in this is not just irresponsible, it is insane. ... Washington's actions are putting the entire world in jeopardy.

Source B

In an interview with a US journalist, Marshal Nikolai Ogarkov, First Deputy Defense Minister and Chief of the General Staff in the Soviet Union, interpreted the real meaning of SDI:

We cannot equal the quality of U.S. arms for a generation or two. Modern military power is based on technology, and technology is based on computers. In the US, small children play with computers. ... Here, we don't even have computers in every office of the Defense Ministry. And for reasons you know well, we cannot make

computers widely available in our society. We will never be able to catch up with you in modern arms until we have an economic revolution. And the question is whether we can have an economic revolution without a political revolution.

Source: Gelb, Leslie, H. "Foreign Affairs: Who Won the Cold War?," *New York Times*. August 20, 1992.

Source C

Ronald Reagan, in a speech to the nation, March 23, 1983:

After careful consultation with my advisers, including the Joint Chiefs of Staff, I believe there is a way. Let me share with you a vision of the future which offers hope. It is that we embark on a program to counter the awesome Soviet missile threat with measures that are defensive. Let us turn to the very strengths in technology that spawned our great industrial base and that have given us the quality of life we enjoy today.

What if free people could live secure in the knowledge that their security did not rest upon the threat of instant U.S. retaliation to deter a Soviet attack, that we could intercept and destroy strategic ballistic missiles before they reached our own soil or that of our allies?

... I clearly recognize that defensive systems have limitations and raise certain problems and ambiguities. If paired with offensive systems, they can be viewed as fostering an aggressive policy, and no one wants that. But with these considerations firmly in mind, I call upon the scientific community in our country, those who gave us nuclear weapons, to turn their great talents now to the cause of mankind and world peace, to give us the means of rendering these nuclear weapons impotent and obsolete.

Source: Reagan, Ronald. "President Reagan Proposes a Missile Defense System." *Making the History of 1989*. <http://chnm.gmu.edu/1989/items/show/59>.

Questions

- 1 What is the central message of source C?
- 2 Compare and contrast the views on SDI expressed by Soviet Premier Andropov in sources A and B with President Reagan's views in source C.
- 3 With reference to their origin and purpose, what are the values and limitations of sources A and B for historians
- 4 Using these sources and your own knowledge access the roles of ideology in arms reduction talks between the United States and the USSR, during the Reagan presidency.

The next summit was in October 1986 in Reykjavik, Iceland. The two settled in for intense negotiations that lasted two days and almost came to agreement on what the *Washington Post* called "sweeping reductions on nuclear arsenals," limiting each side to 1,600 missiles 6,000 warheads. Once again, the sticking point was SDI. There were two more summits between the two leaders. They met next in Washington DC, in December 1987, in a summit that resulted in the signing of an Intermediate Nuclear Force treaty. Another agreement limited strategic ballistic missile warheads to 4,900, while avoiding the SDI issue. Still under discussion was the timing of the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan and human rights issues. Both leaders celebrated a successful summit. On June 1, the last official meeting between Reagan and Gorbachev took place

in Moscow. No agreement of substance was reached, but it was in Moscow that Reagan made a statement that to a significant degree marked the end of the Cold War. On May 31, while walking through Red Square, Reagan renounced his labeling of the USSR as the “Evil Empire,” saying, “I was talking about another time, another era.”

Reagan and Gorbachev engaged each other over four years. At the time, there was a great deal of excitement over the positive working relationship and the progress in relations between the two countries that had been enemies since the end of the Second World War. Issues such as human rights and SDI remained sticking points, but nuclear arsenals had been reduced and the two superpowers had turned from limiting strategic nuclear weapons to reducing them.

President Reagan viewed the threat of communism as among the most serious threats to US security. Events in Nicaragua and El Salvador demanded his immediate attention, otherwise communism could spread northward and eventually into Mexico, putting a communist country on the southern border. When the government of the small island of Grenada turned communist, Reagan saw the threat spreading to the Caribbean. With Cuba, already a Soviet ally, only 90 miles off the Florida coast, Reagan sought to reverse and roll back the gains of communism in the Americas.

Nicaragua

In 1979, after three years of civil war, Daniel Ortega and the left-leaning Sandanistas overthrew the longtime dictator of Nicaragua. The brutal Somoza regime, first taking power in 1936, had been supported by the United States. After the revolution, President Jimmy Carter withheld financial support for the new government. Ortega tried to bring social and economic improvements, but denied US dollars sought aid elsewhere, leaving the opening for Cuba to step in with advisors and technicians.

When Reagan became president in 1981, he wanted to get rid of the Sandanista government. Reagan believed that communism anywhere was a threat, but especially in what the United States considered to be its backyard. He directed the government to provide economic and military resources to opponents. In November, he directed the CIA to begin training a counterrevolutionary army who came to be known as the Contras. The secret aid took a group of a few hundred men, including former Guardia Nacional officers, and turned it into an army of 9,000 by 1985 and up to 15,000 soldiers by the end of 1986. According to National Security Advisor Colin Powell, the Contras, who Reagan called “Freedom Fighters,” never mounted to more than a “highland fighting force.” Additionally, the United States secretly mined Managua harbor, attempting to further destabilize the Sandanista government. During this time the Boland Amendment was passed by the US Congress, making it illegal to provide aid to the Contras. This law caused the Reagan administration to seek a way to get funds to the Contras and ultimately led to the Iran–Contra scandal. Despite the covert aid the Sandanistas stayed in power until

TOK Link

Turning points in history

Ronald Reagan’s trip to Moscow is considered to be a turning point in history. Is the concept of turning point historically legitimate? Debate the concept of historical turning points. List other major turning points in the 20th century, with particular reference to the Americas.

Discussion point

To what extent was Eisenhower’s policy of roll back more effective than Reagan’s?

free elections in 1989, arranged in a settlement created by other Latin American nations, resulted in the election of an anti-Sandinista coalition, and a peaceful transition of power.

El Salvador

Next to Nicaragua in Central America is El Salvador. Political unrest between left and right groups grew throughout the 1970s. The right-leaning government increased its violent repression as a challenge to its power evolved from the FMLN (a group with ties to Cuba) and other opposition, including several leftist guerilla-supported groups and groups established by radical clergy called CEBs (*Comunidades Eclesiásticas de Base*). Additionally, private right-wing death squads including FALANGE and UGB assassinated leftist opponents of the administration. The United States tried to accomplish two seemingly incompatible goals: to keep an anti-communist government in power while at the same time deposing or significantly altering the behavior of the human rights-violating Salvadorian leadership and military in almost every aspect of governance and economic policy.

The Carter administration, having made human rights a significant focus of their foreign policy, and at the same time fearing other communist activities around the globe, had difficulty producing a cohesive policy in El Salvador. Events further fragmented Carter administration policy. On May 9, 1979, the army shot at about 300 peaceful protesters demonstrating in front of the Metropolitan Cathedral in San Salvador. The shootings were filmed by a cameraman from the US TV network CBS. Soon some members of BPR (Popular Revolutionary Bloc) took refuge in the Venezuelan embassy. On May 23, the army killed 14 women and children who were bringing food to BPR members in the embassy. Most walls of downtown San Salvador were covered with graffiti proclaiming the need for El Salvador's liberation from its rulers. President Carter, in the context of a reheating of the Cold War, was loath to lose El Salvador to communists and regarded the preservation of a non-communist government as paramount. The concurrent efforts at reform were mostly ineffective, despite millions of dollars of aid and interruption of that aid after the December 1980 murder of four American churchwomen. The human rights violations continued including the murder of two American reform advisors. Just before Ronald Reagan's inauguration, the FMLN, a communist revolutionary army, attacked, hoping to depose the new government, but President José Napoleón Duarte survived with assistance from the Carter administration.

The Reagan administration, filled with foreign policy professionals including Vice President George Bush, James Baker, Richard "Dick" Cheney, Alexander Haig and George Schultz, steered the ideological president along a course that clarified and accelerated the Carter policy. On March 10, 1983, the president made the reasons for his El Salvador policy clear:

Central America is simply too close, and the strategic stakes are too high, for us to ignore the danger of governments seizing power there with ideological ties to the Soviet Union. If the FMLN were

to win, El Salvador will join Cuba and Nicaragua as a base for spreading fresh violence to Guatemala, Honduras, even Costa Rica. The killing will increase, and so will the threat to Panama, the Canal, and ultimately Mexico.

Source: Anderson, Thomas P. 1982. *Politics in Central America*. Stanford, CA: Praeger. p. 2.

The Reagan policy was to provide US military advisors, train the El Salvadorian armed forces (ESAF), greatly increase material aid, and offer strategic assistance. With such strong emphasis on fighting the perceived communist threat, Carter's attention to human rights receded even more. In fact, to make the massive aid increase acceptable to the people of the United States, the Reagan administration took on a policy of exaggerating the human rights progress of the Duarte regime.

During the first years of the 1980s, more money was pumped into El Salvador than in the two previous decades. From 1962 to 1979, the US transferred approximately \$50 million in arms grants to the Salvadorian government, with more than \$1 billion in arms grants from 1980 to 1990. An additional \$1.7 billion in economic assistance accompanied the military grants. The Reagan administration was not content to support the ruling government without reform. The administration wanted a more centrist government and preferred not to have human rights violations. There was still a conflict between ideology and fighting the Cold War in the Americas.

After elections in 1982, that the CIA spent \$2 million to help conduct, there was a show of popular support for the right-wing ARENA Party leader Roberto D'Abuisson, a man President Carter's ambassador called a "pathological killer." Further pressure was exerted on El Salvador to install a banker, Álvaro Magaña (considered to be a moderate), as the provisional president. The Reagan administration also pushed for land reform and greater democracy. Every six months the administration presented a report to Congress on the status of human rights, but some media and political opponents claimed that the administration exaggerated the progress of El Salvador on that front. While pressuring the government of El Salvador to reform, the Reagan administration pursued a policy of not negotiating with the guerilla organizations, believing it should not provide victories to the left-wing groups that had not been accomplished on the battlefield. The administration continued to claim that the anti-government groups were funded by Cuba, thus any concessions would advance the cause of communism.

By 1985, with ESAF controlling the cities and the FMLN and allies operating in the countryside, the war was still evolving. The ESAF began to exert itself on the battlefield, taking the battles to the rural areas, and the guerillas switched to hit-and-run tactics. Still, there was a great deal of corruption in the ESAF officer corps and the military leaders refused to confront the concept that their victory would not be achieved unless the needs and grievances of Salvadorians were addressed. The Reagan administration strategy was to keep the left-wing guerillas at bay while building legitimate

government institutions such as courts, police and a structured military. The United States would spend the next several years with the goal of democratizing and liberalizing all sectors of government. The policy operated with the assumption that the United States had leverage through military and economic aid to force the compliance of the Duarte government. Duarte offered some degree of compliance and advances in the development of the civil bureaucracy, but there was still corruption and violent repression. The Reagan administration had less leverage than it thought as the Salvadorians knew the US were more concerned about stopping communism than they were about reforming the Salvadorian government, so while some reforms took place, the regime saw little need for major changes.

According to the policy analyst Benjamin Schwartz, a significant reason why Duarte was willing to liberalize institutions was that the death squads operating during the 1970s and the first half of the 1980s were successful in weakening the left-wing opposition. Approximately 8,000 victims were killed by right-wing death squads before Duarte took power and an additional 30,000 were killed in the first term of the Reagan presidency. As a result there was just not enough opposition left to pose a significant threat to government control. The left-wing guerillas would not mount a significant threat to overthrow the government after the coup attempt of 1980. This weakness provided some space for liberalization of the Duarte regime.

Grenada

In late 1983, the leftist regime in Grenada grabbed the attention of Reagan. The island nation, situated near the southern end of the Lesser Antilles, 100 miles north of Venezuela, separating the Atlantic Ocean from the Caribbean Sea, gained independence from Great Britain in 1974. Since 1979, Grenada, a small country with a population of approximately 90,000, had been ruled by Maurice Bishop who headed the people's revolutionary government (PRC), a Marxist government with close ties to Cuba and the USSR. In 1983, Bishop and members of his cabinet were seized and subsequently killed in an intra-party coup. The Bishop government was already in the process of constructing, with Cuban assistance, a 10,000 foot airport runway with the announced purpose of increasing tourism, but which United States officials considered to be primarily of military importance.

The overthrow caused Reagan to intervene, for reasons that included the safety of US medical students living on the island. The Organization of Eastern Caribbean States, a group of former British colonies, also wanted intervention. On October 25, Operation Urgent Fury commenced with the invasion of the island by United States military forces in total numbering 5,000 with a security force of 300 security provided by the OECS. They were opposed by a force of 2,100, including 1,200 Grenadians and 780 Cubans. By October 28 most of the fighting was over and

TOK Link

History and foreign affairs

The foreign activities of nations are based on many factors, including its perceptions of its role in the region and world, judgements of events in other countries, and its capabilities.

To what extent do perceptions of circumstances and events create different versions of reality?

What questions should powerful nations seek answers to before acting to influence events in other countries?

Analyze the Grenada invasion from the point of view of Cuba, as well as the US administration. Refer back to the discussion in chapter 5 (p. 312) to assist you in your research.

on November 3 hostilities were declared over. The only US military intervention of the Reagan years was deemed a success by the administration, with the 599 US citizens rescued and the Marxist government deposed. Operation Urgent Fury was supported by most members of Congress, both Democrats and Republicans, and much of the US public. The quick, decisive action by Reagan was a welcome success after years of perceived US decline. An interim government held power until elections were held in December 1984. The New National Party won 14 of 15 seats and Grenada's constitution, suspended since 1979, was restored.

The Middle East

Ronald Reagan was confronted by a number of issues in the Middle East. Among these was a civil war in Lebanon, a hostile government in Iran, and the Iran–Iraq War. Lebanon and Iran proved especially troubling to the conduct of effective foreign policy. The first direct US military intervention in the region was in Lebanon in 1958 in support of the pro-Western government headed by Camille Chamoun. In the context of the Cold War and the Eisenhower Doctrine, involvement meant stopping the Soviets. The intervention resulted in one US death, and significantly reduced civil disturbances, threats and violence. The United States would again send forces into the country 24 years later.

Lebanon, still a barely a functioning democracy, was in turmoil. Many factions within Lebanon competed for power, among these were the Lebanese Christian Militia, Palestine Liberation Organization and many other armed factions; all had been fighting for power over the last seven years, with the exception of a fragile cease-fire partially engineered by US negotiators in place by July 1981. Syrian and Iranian armed forces also had a Lebanese presence. In June 1982 Israel, a long time American ally, invaded Lebanon in order to stop shellings of Israeli settlements near the border with Lebanon. The invasion had a second purpose: to destroy the PLO and bring about a political order favorable to Israel. After the Israeli bombing of Beirut and the deaths of scores of civilians, Reagan felt strongly that the violence had to stop, and called the Israeli prime minister, Menachem Begin, on August 12 urging him to stop. Begin did. It was after this that a multinational peace force would be assembled to provide stability.

The previous year, the Reagan administration had voiced support for the Lebanese government including writing a public letter backing the Lebanese president Elias Sarkis. Additionally, a special emissary, Philip Habbib, was appointed, signaling an elevation of Lebanon's importance to Reagan's foreign policy. In the same time period, the administration tried to restrain Israeli Defense Force (IDF) activities. In June 1981, Secretary of State Alexander Haig delayed delivery of ten F-16 fighter planes in response to the Israeli bombing of an Iraqi nuclear reactor, but additionally to pressure Israel to reduce violent actions. A favorable policy toward Israel as a bulwark against Soviet expansion in the Middle East was ongoing, but this was a significant act. The United States continued to believe that the Middle East was

Activity

Looking for patterns

The Monroe Doctrine first defined the United States self-determined relationship to the rest of the Americas. The better part of a century later the Roosevelt Corollary announced a more aggressive approach. In the mid-century the US wanted to be a "Good Neighbor."



Create a data table in chronological order of US military involvement in the Americas. Can you identify a pattern?

vital to US national security. Even as it pursued initiatives in 1981 and into the summer of 1982, the Reagan administration was conflicted about how to act. While Haig and his successor as Secretary of State, George Schultz, both favored deeper involvement, the Secretary of Defense, Caspar Weinberger and the military Joint Chiefs of Staff were quite reluctant about entering what could become another Vietnam. The United States was concerned about the violence in the region for political, military and humane reasons, but in June still had not given serious thought to direct military involvement. After the Israeli bombing of Beirut, involvement was reconsidered.

Beginning August 25, 1982, Reagan sent 800 Marines to Beirut as part of a multinational peacekeeping force (MNF). The purpose was to allow the PLO to withdraw to Syria to be followed by the IDF withdrawal towards the Israel-Lebanon border. Additional justifications by the administration included guaranteeing the safety of Palestinian civilians and restoration of Lebanese government control. The PLO withdrew and the IDF began its pull out, followed by the rapid redeployment of the MNF away from Beirut by September 10. Violence returned later that month, almost immediately upon withdrawal of peacekeeping forces. On September 14 the newly-elected president, Bashir Gemayel, was assassinated by a bomb and the following day IDF moved into West Beirut. On September 16-18, approximately 750 Palestinians were killed in two refugee camps. These developments, especially the massacre of civilians, upset Reagan, as one purpose of the MNF was to guarantee civilian safety. On September 20, Reagan announced a new MNF consisting of American, French and Italian forces.

The Reagan administration had no clear plan. John Kelly, former ambassador to Lebanon in President Reagan's second term, labeled the approach reactive. The marines began deployment on September 29, initially numbering 1,200, but increasing in the next year to 1,800. They were to be an interposition force, but it was never stated between which hostile parties they were interposed. Without a clear mission, the US forces became a bargaining chip for both the Reagan and Gemayel administrations to leverage each other, and came to be seen as supporting Lebanese Christians, the Lebanese government, and Israel to the detriment of all other factions in Lebanon. In March 1983, the United States announced that the MNF would stay in Lebanon until Syrian, PLO, and Israeli forces withdrew. Two months later, Lebanon and Israel signed an agreement stating that Israel would withdraw provided that the PLO and Syrian forces withdrew. However, Syria and the PLO were not party to the agreement. During the following months, there were numerous skirmishes between the US marines and various armed factions. As Israel began withdrawal, violence between factions increased and attacks on the marines continued.

On October 23, a truck carrying a bomb penetrated defenses and exploded close to the US marine barracks at the Lebanon International Airport, killing 241 marines. A second truck exploded near the French barracks killing 56 soldiers. Reagan, suspecting the

newly formed Hezbollah for the attacks, ordered the bombing of their headquarters. Initially, Reagan insisted that US forces must remain there, on the advice of Secretary of State George Schulz, as leaving would be a major victory for radical and rejectionist elements. The deaths of so many marines, however, caused anger at home. The administration reassessed its Lebanese policy in the next months, coming to the conclusion that without a sizeable increase in military forces the United States could not significantly influence events. On December 4, US planes attacked a Syrian air defense site that had fired on American planes, and while the administration debated policy, it appeared that the United States was choosing to take sides in the Lebanese conflict. In January 1984, Schulz stated that the United States would continue to pursue the mission in Lebanon, but Defense Secretary Weinberger disagreed and on February 7 Reagan announced that US forces would withdraw to ships off the Lebanese coast. Embassy officials began to leave that day, and by March 5 all US military personnel had been redeployed. On May 17, the government of Lebanon cancelled the IDF withdrawal agreement with Israel. US troops would never be deployed again in the Middle East during the Reagan years.

To John Kelly, the mission was doomed to be a failure from the beginning: “Token military force with a vague mission was probably a recipe for failure. The responsibility rests firmly with the leaders who made the decisions.”

The Iran–Contra affair

What came to be known as the Iran–Contra affair resulted from the strange coincidence of the Reagan administration’s Middle Eastern policy and the support for anti-government “Contra” forces in Nicaragua. Reagan, who called the Contras the “moral equivalent of the Founding Fathers,” was extremely concerned about US citizens held hostage in Lebanon as well as the revolutionary government of Iran. The combination of hostages, secret funding for the Contras, and an ill-fated attempt to sell arms to supposed Iranian moderates in the hope that they would overthrow the radical clerics who took power after the 1979 revolution led to the biggest scandal of the Reagan presidency.

In the 1982 mid-term elections Democrats gained seats in the House and Senate, empowering them to put a legislative halt to the administration’s support of the Contras. The Boland Amendment, which passed the House 411 to 0 votes, made it illegal for the CIA and the Defense Department to support the Contras. A stronger second Boland Amendment that banned third-party and any US government funding became law in 1984. The United States, however, secretly mined Managua harbor, which the CIA director William Casey publicly denied. Reagan wanted to keep supporting the Contras. National Security Director Robert “Bud” McFarlane and Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North acquired money from several countries including Saudi Arabia that was transferred to the Nicaraguan anti-government forces. Reagan was pleased when told about the secret foreign-funding sources.

Activity

Looking ahead

Write down the tactics and results of US military involvement in Lebanon. Take note of John Kelly’s comment. Be prepared to compare events in Lebanon to the Gulf War and the “Powell Doctrine.” Find out the concept of future Secretary of State Colin Powell’s doctrine for use of military force.



Which war laid the foundation for the Powell Doctrine?

In 1985, President Reagan approved a secret plan to sell arms to Iran through Israel to both support Iranian moderates and obtain the release of hostages. More than 1,500 anti-tank weapons were sold to Iran in 1985 and 1986 and several hostages were released. More than \$12 million was secretly passed to the rebels. The NSC enlisted the help of Panama's dictator, Manuel Noriega, to assist supplying the Contras. The funding of the Contras was successful. But the arms-for-hostage exchange was in direct contradiction to the publicly stated US policy of not negotiating for hostages. Reagan publicly denied what had happened in 1986. What became known as the Iran–Contra Affair, however, unraveled when a US cargo plane ferrying arms to the Contras was shot down in Nicaragua. November brought newspaper articles in Lebanon reporting the events. Schultz and Vice President George Bush advised the president to publicly admit to the arms-for-hostages deal, but Reagan refused to consider the proposal. Forced by continuing press reports, Reagan approved a commission headed by John Tower to look into the affair, but the pressure continued to build and in December asked for a special prosecutor to be appointed. The House and Senate mounted an investigation. In 1987, Reagan, appeared on national television and stated, "I told the American people I did not trade arms for hostages. My heart and best intentions still tell me that is true, but the facts and the evidence tell me it is not," admitting that he had approved what Secretary of State George Schultz called, "a hostage bazaar." Reagan never admitted and investigators never were able to ascertain specifically what Reagan knew and his level of participation. NSC officials involved in the arms trades and funds diversions testified that they had kept the president out of the loop to insulate him.

The Iran–Contra affair weakened the reputation of the president. Many people were convinced he was lying, while others saw his underlings running wild, enabled to run their own foreign policy initiatives because of Reagan's hands-off delegation style. It was the Iran–Contra affair that combined the Reagan doctrine of fighting communism wherever it appeared with his well-documented compassion for those in need and an ill-understood Middle East policy. The result was a still radical Iran, more hostages taken, and a simmering civil war in Nicaragua.

President George Bush, 1989–93

1988 was the year of the general election to follow Ronald Reagan as president. After falling to an approval rating of 40% when the Iran–Contra affair took its toll, Reagan's popularity in the US increased throughout 1988. By the time of the November election, Reagan, with his regained popularity, paved the way for his vice president, George Herbert Walker Bush, to follow him. In what was predicted to be a close election Bush soundly beat his Democrat rival, Massachusetts Governor, Michael Dukakis, helped by the Democrat's campaign missteps and by promising to continue the policies of Ronald Reagan, but in a kinder and gentler way.

TOK Link

What knowledge issues was Reagan confronting with his statement about trading arms for hostages? How can reason and emotion lead to different truths?



How should a historian interpret Reagan's remarks?

On January 20, 1989, George Bush took office. When he left office four years later, the Berlin Wall had fallen, the Soviet Union no longer existed, the government of China had killed hundreds of its own citizens on Tiananmen Square, the United States had invaded Panama, and sent hundreds of thousands of troops to the Middle East to fight in a war against Iraq. It was a period of major changes in the world for a president who approached the responsibilities of the office with a pragmatic and deliberate style. President Bush took office with the idea of continuing Ronald Reagan's policies, both foreign and domestic. He lacked what he termed, "the vision thing," and appeared to enjoy foreign policy more than the domestic realm. However, he wanted "to make kinder the face of the nation and gentler the face of the world." On the domestic front, he promoted volunteerism, instituted policies to improve the lives of the disabled, and other measures that made the government do its part to encourage a more compassionate nation. Additionally, he had to deal with a savings and loan crisis, a rising federal budget deficit, a massive oil spill along Alaska's coast, and placing two justices on the Supreme Court.

Domestic policies

A major accomplishment of the Bush Administration was the 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Act extended some of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to people with disabilities. It prohibited discrimination and required reasonable accommodations in the workplace, as well as expanding public accessibility. The Congress had been working on a bill for several years. Many conservatives opposed the ADA as a betrayal of the Reagan Revolution. They believed that government was the problem, not the solution and that the ADA was a huge intrusion of the federal government into the commercial arena, requiring the expenditure of dollars for a myriad of accommodations and the pursuit of many new regulations. To Bush, the ADA increased freedom. To the ADA's supporters the Act is the single most important accomplishment of the Bush administration.

Bush was not always supportive of civil rights legislation. In October 1990 he vetoed a civil rights bill that the *New York Times* called the "most comprehensive civil rights legislation since the Voting Rights Act of 1965," arguing that it maintained racial quotas. Congress passed another civil rights bill concerning employment discrimination that did become law in 1991. Bush twice vetoed family and medical leave bills because he did not believe that the federal government should mandate companies to provide a specific benefit. The decision

George Herbert Walker Bush (1924–)



George Bush, possibly the most experienced man ever elected president, was born to a well-to-do and well-connected family in Milton, Massachusetts. His father was Senator Prescott Bush. He attended the prestigious Phillips Academy. Upon turning 18 he immediately enlisted in the United States Navy, becoming the youngest fighter pilot in U.S. naval history. He flew 58 missions and was shot down once. The Navy awarded him the Distinguished Flying Cross for bravery. He married Barbara Pierce in 1945. Among their six children is John (Jeb) Bush, the former governor of Florida, and George W. Bush, the 43rd president of the United States. Bush attended Yale and after graduating went to Texas to pursue a career as an oil man. His career in politics began in 1966, when he was elected to Congress from Texas. After four years (1967–71) he became the United States ambassador to the United Nations. He then served a year as chairman of the Republican National Committee, followed by stints as chief liaison officer to the People's Republic of China, CIA director, director of the Council of Foreign Relations, and eight years as Ronald Reagan's vice president. After a four-year term, Bush was defeated by Bill Clinton. George and Barbara Bush retired to Kennebunkport, Maine. In later years he became active with relief efforts, including aid for the victims of the 2004 tsunami in Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, among other nations.



George Bush speaking at a NATO conference.

Activity

Filling in your chart

As you read, continue to fill in the chart. Highlight similarities between the policies of Reagan and Bush in one color and indicate differences with another.

to support ADA and oppose family and medical leave mandates and a civil rights bill was thought by many to show inconsistency in government intrusion in the workplace.

7 • The domestic and foreign policies of Reagan, Bush and Clinton

Environmental regulation

In terms of environmental regulation, Bush was more comfortable with federal regulation of pollution than his predecessor. In June 1990, he proposed major amendment to the 1963 Clean Air Act to specifically reduce pollution in three areas: acid rain, urban air pollution, and toxic emissions. It also strengthened enforcement. The bills, which passed the House and Senate by large margins, also included a phase-out of ozone-depleting chemicals in line with the Montreal Protocol. The new amendments signed by Bush on November 15, 1990, added some significant changes, including encouraging the use of market principles, performance-based standards, and emission trading. Low-sulfur coal and natural gas use were promoted as was energy conservation, and the law effectively reduced oil imports by one million barrels per day. The president's proposal, support and signing of the far-ranging Clean Air Act amendments served to demonstrate his commitment to a healthier environment, but to Reagan conservatives it was more proof that his successor was betraying the less-government theme by introducing increased government interference in the market.

On March 24, just two months after the new president assumed office, *Exxon Valdez*, an oil supertanker, ran aground in Prince William Sound off the Alaskan coast. Within hours millions of gallons of crude oil spilled into the water, eventually contaminating more than 1,100 miles of coastline. The oil spill was the largest in United States history, and caused significant damage to fisheries, shore habitats, wildlife of all types, and recreational areas over a widespread area. Despite the almost immediate response from private clean-up crews and Exxon, the effects of the oil damage continued to be felt into the new millennium. Private companies were responsible for much of the clean-up, but there was significant federal government presence by Coast Guard personnel and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). As determined by an EPA report to President Bush later that year, both the private and federal responses were inadequate, resulting in more environmental damage than necessary, but also concluding that prevention is the primary element in protecting the environment from oil spill damage. As a result of the oil spill,

Activity

Gathering evidence

Research the Reagan and Bush administrations' approaches to and implementation of regulation. After gathering specific evidence in a variety of areas, react to the following knowledge claim:

Despite his pledge to continue Ronald Reagan's policy of reducing government regulation of business and industry, George Bush greatly increased federal regulations.

Activity

Presidential decision-making

A simulation

You are President George Bush Snr's chief domestic policy advisor. It is the beginning of his term and your job is to create a list of domestic policy initiatives. Create a priority list for the president, based on his political philosophy, the country's needs and wants, and political reality. Present your priority list to the class as if you were making a proposal to the president.

Activity

TOK issues

Discuss the importance, accuracy, and trustworthiness of eye-witness accounts, presidential memoirs, "tell-all" books, and speeches. How does a historian determine intent? Is it the role of the historian to find intent, or simply to present a variety of evidence and let the reader decide?



How do historians know the reasons for presidential decision-making?

Congress passed the Oil Pollution Act of 1990 which required the Coast Guard to strengthen regulations on oil tankers, their owners and operators.

Education

During the 1988 campaign, in a contentious interview with CBS TV network anchorman Dan Rather, Bush stated that he wanted to be the “Education President.” Partly spurred on by the 1983 **A Nation at Risk** report that pointed out many weaknesses in public education, President Bush called together the nation’s state governors for Education 2000. The Education Summit took place in autumn 1989. Attendees included the future president, then Arkansas governor, Bill Clinton. The summit participants met with directives from the president to meet the rising expectation of US businesses and to change the emphasis from ensuring access through programs such as Title I to improved results based on specific academic outcomes. The proposals that came out of the summit included higher academic standards and federal demonstration grants for **education vouchers** among several proposals. Congress did not turn the initiatives into a bill that could pass, so Bush’s educational efforts resulted in increased attention to education, but not immediate federal action.

The economy

Bush took office, succeeding Reagan, with the largest gross federal debt in the history of the United States. The annual deficit had increased in 1988 to over \$250 billion. The combination of Reagan era tax cuts and the increases in defense spending while failing to significantly curtail domestic spending is often cited as the causes of the increase. The rising economy failed to overcome the increasing budget expenditures. The gross debt totaled 53% of the nation’s GDP, the largest percentage since 1962. Both Congress and the president felt they needed to act. Bush was constrained by his unequivocal promise not to raise taxes during the presidential campaign of 1988. During lengthy and sometimes acrimonious negotiations with the Democrat-controlled Congress for the 1991 budget, Bush came to the conclusion that to get a budget deal he would have to agree to some tax increases. The Democrats wanted to significantly raise taxes on the wealthy, as they claimed that the rich had benefitted disproportionately from Reaganomics over the past decade. Bush issued a statement in June 1990 that back-peddled on his campaign promise by claiming the necessity of revenue increases, a euphemism for increased taxes. Despite the reality of the fiscal and political situation, Bush was harshly criticized by members of his own party for compromising with Democrats on the Omnibus Budget Act of 1990 that cut expenditures and raised taxes. While many looked at the bill as responsible, the act of agreeing to raise taxes, something his predecessor had done several times after the initial tax decreases, caused segments of the US electorate to doubt his word. Even after the budget agreement, yearly deficits increased to more than \$300

A Nation at Risk A report on education issued by the National Commission on Excellence in Education, formed by Reagan’s Secretary of Education in 1981. The report said that the economic leadership of the United States was threatened by a weak system of public education.

Education vouchers are certificates of financial value provided to students (and by default their parents) who choose not to attend a public school. The state-provided funds would be applied to tuition for a private school.

Discussion point

Presidential terms

After the Roosevelt years, each president was limited to two four-year terms by the 22nd Amendment. This made the president a “lame duck” for the entire 2nd term. How do term limits help or hinder the function of a presidential democracy? How does this differ from a parliamentary system?

billion by Bush's last year in office, and the federal debt totaled more than \$4 trillion, rising to two-thirds of GDP.

During the latter half of the 1980s the deregulated **savings and loan associations** (or S & Ls), banking companies that had traditionally made conservative loans for homes, began to feel the results of high-risk investments. Just after his inauguration, Bush announced that the federal government would have to rescue the badly damaged financial institutions. In February 1989, Bush proposed a plan to bail-out the S&Ls. The proposal and negotiations with Congress resulted in the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery and Enforcement Act of 1989 (FIRREA). As part of the program, the Resolution Trust Corporation was formed to liquidate the insolvent S&Ls. By the end of the Bush administration, close to 600 S&Ls were closed. The total cost to taxpayers for all institutions resolved by the RTC came to \$153 billion. Certainly, those costs contributed to the rising federal deficit during the Bush years. In total, the crisis resulted in the closure of a thousand banks. FIRREA was a significant government Act to protect the US economy and gave federal officials greater power than before.

The S&L crisis, along with several crashes in real estate prices, should have been an indicator that the economy was not as healthy when Bush entered the Oval Office as it may have seemed. However, GDP increased around 3% each of the first three quarters of 1989, then dropped to a 1% increase in the fourth quarter, jumped to 4% in the first quarter of 1990, but by autumn the economy was shrinking. The technical recession (two or more quarters of negative economic growth) lasted about six months before a slow return to positive numbers in mid-1991. The recession was relatively mild in terms of production, but unemployment reached just below 8% of the workforce at the peak and stayed at or above 7% from November 1991 to the end of Bush's term of office. These numbers were much lower than the 10.8% unemployment of the Reagan recession a decade before, but Bush was criticized a great deal for his response to the worsening economy. In December 1990, he told reporters that a recession might be possible and that the president should do what he can to lessen the effects. The 1991 State of the Union address began with a discussion of foreign policy, adding to the perception that he cared more about the international scene than domestic problems. He stated that some regions of the country were experiencing economic distress and that some people were hurting badly. That was followed by remarks about the economic success of the previous decade in adding 20 million jobs and lowering inflation. Proposals for helping those suffering from the downturn were slim. The proposed budget included tax-free savings and allowing Individual Retirement Accounts to be used to buy homes for first-time buyers, but remaining consistent with his pragmatic style, he avoided announcing large programs that would increase the federal deficit. Bush discussed federal debt and how a conservative approach would free up dollars for investment. Little of what he proposed offered immediate relief. Additionally, he claimed that the recession would be over soon and that the focus should be on long-term growth.

Savings and loan associations are US financial institutions that accept savings deposits and make mortgage, car and other personal loans to individual members; a cooperative venture, they are also known as building societies outside of the Americas.

Activity

Public support

Research the support levels for George H. W. Bush vs. Ronald Reagan during the first terms of their presidencies. To what extent were the levels of support for their economic policies similar? Compare and contrast the responses and results of each administration's economic measures.

Activity

Assessing the presidency

In 1991, Stephen Moore, Director of Fiscal Policy Studies, Cato Institute (a libertarian think tank) wrote:

During his 1988 bid for the presidency, George Bush distinguished himself from Ronald Reagan by promising to create a “kinder and gentler nation.” He also said that he wanted to be known as the “environmental president” and the “education president.” By now it is apparent that what Bush meant was that he was eager to spend substantially more money than Reagan had on a wide range of domestic programs.

Source: Moore, Stephen. “Policy Analysis: The Profligate President: A Midterm Review of George Bush’s Fiscal Policy Performance.” *Cato Institute*. February 4, 1991. <http://www.cato.org>.

Look at the evidence to decide if Moore was correct. Organize a table comparing the two presidents on domestic policy using the following criteria (you may add others if you like):

- taxes
- education
- environment
- civil rights
- healthcare

Foreign policies

President George Bush came into office with a turbulent Central America, the USSR undergoing *perestroika* and *glasnost*, and China in the midst of a small degree of political liberalization. By the time he left office, China had clamped down on dissent but began to modify its communist economic system, peace had come to several warring Central American nations, the Berlin Wall had come down and the Soviet Union ceased to exist. Washington’s influence and actions varied according to the situation.

Central America

The administration inherited Reagan’s policies in the region, including involvement in El Salvador and Nicaragua. In Nicaragua, the administration continued to support the Contras, but the situation had changed by the time Bush took over because of the Tela Accords of February 1989, in which five Central American presidents agreed to a process which would result in fair elections the next year and called for the demobilization of the Contras. Bush changed the administration’s objectives from the Central American equivalent of “roll back” to containment of the Sandinista regime, making sure it kept its promises by maintaining support for the Contras despite the Tesoro Accords. In other words, while Reagan could not abide a communist Nicaragua, Bush could, while working with determination towards a different future.

A peace process had been agreed upon in August 1987 and Nicaraguan elections were scheduled for February 1990. Bush stated that he supported the peace process, but insisted that the Contras, mostly in camps in neighboring Honduras, needed continued support to provide pressure on the Sandinistas to keep to their promises of increased political freedom. Bush and the Congress agreed to the

Activity

Newspapers and history

The Tela Accords

The following passage is the lead paragraph of the *New York Times* article "Contras, Lost Cause?" by Mark A. Uhlig, August 10, 1989:

Source A

TELA, Honduras, Aug. 9—As five Central American Presidents moved toward an agreement Monday on the demobilization of the Nicaraguan rebels, the Bush Administration sent out urgent signals trying to prevent that result. But after eight years of American support for the contra army, diplomats said the logic seemed to have gone out of the fight.

"They themselves couldn't explain what we should be waiting for," a Central American official said, referring to the Americans. "They still have their army, but they had lost their policy."

Source: (<http://www.nytimes.com/1989/08/10/world/the-contras-lost-cause-burden-on-the-region-brings-about-accord.html>).

Questions

- 1 To what extent was the unnamed Central American official correct?
- 2 Based on your own knowledge and research, why did the Bush administration "send out urgent signals trying to prevent" an agreement?
- 3 What is the stated purpose of the Accords signed in Tela, Honduras?
- 4 Does the choice of Central American presidents to work against the wishes of the president of the United States signal a change in power relationships? Explain.

"Treaty of Washington" in which the Democratic leadership and the president agreed to suspend discussion of differences until after the Nicaragua's February 1990 election. The United States continued to apply diplomatic pressure on the Sandinistas and non-military aid to the Contras. Just before an August 1989 Central American Summit the Sandinistas committed to settling differences with the opposition over election procedures and at the Summit the Central American nations called for demobilization of the Contras by early December. The Bush administration played both sides, announcing support for the agreement but disagreeing over the disarming of the Contras. Its policy can be summed up as continued support for the Contras, tacit but weak support for the agreements, and support for internal opposition. In the months up to the election the administration transferred funds to the United Nicaraguan Opposition (a collection

Source B

The following is the text of the Tela Accords signed in the Summit of Central American Presidents on August 7, 1989, in Puerto de Tela, Honduras. The signatories were Oscar Arias Sánchez, president of Costa Rica; Alfredo Cristiani Burkard, president of El Salvador; Marco Vinicio Cerezo Arévalo, president of Guatemala;

They (the presidents) "... have subscribed to the document [called] Collective Plan for the Voluntary Demobilization, Repatriation, or Relocation in Nicaragua and Third Countries of the members of the Nicaraguan Resistance and their dependents as well as the assistance toward the demobilization of all those involved in armed activities in the countries of the region, if they voluntarily request it.

Source: Documentation from the portal of the Central American Integration System (SICA). <http://www.sica.int>.

José Azcona Hoyo, president of Honduras; Daniel Ortega Saavedra, president of Nicaragua.

The System of Central American Integration (SICA) is an international organization created by the States of the Republics of El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Guatemala, Costa Rica and Panama. Its headquarters is in El Salvador.

of more than a dozen anti-Sandinista groups, an organization that the administration helped create). The administration also complained of unfair election procedures even before the election took place, hinting that the Sandinistas would not accept election results if the votes did not go their way.

The election took place in February as scheduled and in a welcome surprise to the Bush administration Violeta Chamorro won the election with 55% of the vote and the UNO claimed a majority of seats in the National Assembly. The Contras refused to disband even after the election. Daniel Ortega and the Sandinistas peacefully gave up power, defying the Bush administration's predictions. After inauguration day the Contras agreed to disband and the Bush administration let its economic assistance flow to the new government of Nicaragua with the approval of Congress, led by Democrats who felt that as the United States had significantly contributed to the economic distress of the country, it was obligated to assist in its rebuilding and recovery. The debate was only over how much to spend.

Panama

The Bush administration's focus in Central America continued southward to Panama, which, in December 1989, would become the first major military operation of the Bush presidency. Operation Just Cause would involve Manuel Noriega, the military dictator of Panama, was already under indictment in the United States on drug trafficking charges, specifically cocaine. Previously, Noriega had been a long-time asset of the CIA whose contributions included helping supply the Contras and reportedly allowing the SR-71 Blackbird spy plane landing and take-off rights. . Early in the Reagan years he switched his support to the Sandinistas. In a time of a cocaine epidemic in the cities of the United States, the Reagan administration took steps to control Noriega, including imposing economic sanctions. The sanctions caused serious harm to Panama's financial sector. Still Noriega remained in power, but opposition to Noriega continued to grow in the U.S., especially after the 1988 indictment.

In the first months of the Bush presidency, Panama policy was uncertain as the State Department wanted to remove the Panamanian leader, but was opposed by the CIA and Defense Department, both seeing practical advantages to Noriega. Elections were scheduled in May, featuring Noriega's hand-picked candidate. The United States funneled \$10 million to the opposition candidate. When Noriega's candidate lost, he refused to abide by the election results, causing a hardening of U.S. policy against Noriega. The Bush administration upped rhetorical pressure, increased the number of troops in the canal zone, which then engaged in aggressive military exercises, and imposed stricter economic measures. Bush worked diplomatic channels to secure condemnation of Noriega by most western European and, importantly, Latin American nations. To solve the crisis, in July the Organization of American States (OAS), seeking to remove a dictator from power and prevent intervention from the United States, tried to persuade Noriega to leave office and to negotiate with the opposition and form a new government. The efforts yielded no concessions from Panama's leader. An October coup attempt by dissident units of the Panamanian Defense Forces



Why was the Bush administration surprised at the election result?

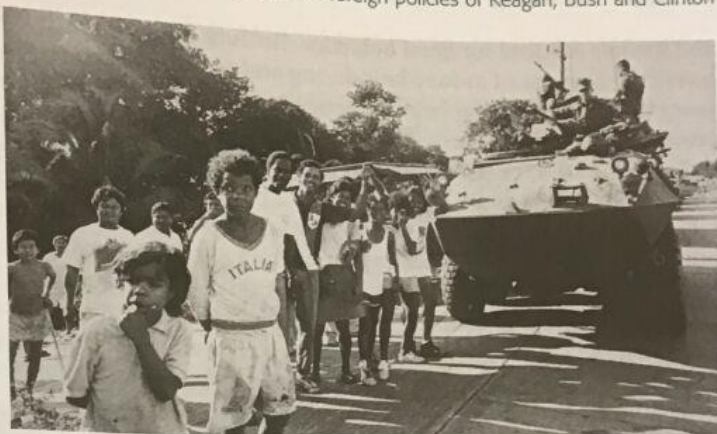
(PDF) failed due to flawed planning, weak execution, and steps taken by loyal PDF troops. Bush was criticized for not supporting the coup attempt, but his National Security Advisor, Colin Powell, a serious man whose Vietnam experience contributed to his prudent approach to military action, supported Bush's decision.

During the crisis some conservatives in Congress wanted to use Noriega's criminal activities and illegitimate hold on power as justification to revoke the Panama Canal Treaty President Jimmy Carter had signed, but Bush, echoing Reagan's understanding of the imperialistic image of the United States in Latin America, refused to go along, separating the ill-deeds of Manuel Noriega from the country he ruled.

December brought critical changes. On 16 December, Noriega declared that a "state of war" existed between the United States and Panama. On the same day members of the PDF shot an unarmed US soldier when he and several friends drove through a roadblock. Two U.S. citizens who witnessed the shooting were beaten. Bush felt the killings and beatings offered more than ample justification for an armed effort to remove Noriega. In a televised speech on 20 December he declared:

General Noriega's reckless threats and attacks upon Americans in Panama created an imminent danger to the 35,000 American citizens in Panama. As President, I have no higher obligation than to safeguard the lives of American citizens. And that is why I directed our Armed Forces to protect the lives of American citizens in Panama and to bring General Noriega to justice in the United States.

The same day 20,000 US troops attacked PDF forces across Panama in the invasion called Operation Just Cause, overcoming opposition in a matter of days. For more than a week Noriega took refuge in the Vatican Embassy in Panama City. He surrendered in early January. Noriega was quickly transferred to the United States where he was placed on trial in September 1991 and convicted of drug trafficking at the conclusion of the trial in April 1992. He was sentenced to 40 years. The sentence was later reduced to 30 years,



Children cheering US marines following offensive in Vecca Monte, west of Panama City, during Operation Just Cause, the name given to the US invasion of Panama to remove Manuel Noriega.

Discussion point



What makes a cause "just"?

Examine several ethical systems for a definition of "justice." Then determine how just the US invasion of Panama was from a variety of perspectives.

Colin Powell (1937–)

Colin Powell's military career began in 1958. In the early 1960s he served as one of the original 16,000 military advisors to South Vietnamese forces. He served two tours in Vietnam and was awarded a number of medals. During the 1970s he moved to the Pentagon, then became a brigadier general. In the early years of the Reagan administration he served as Secretary of Defense, Weinberger's senior military aid. In 1987 Powell was appointed national security advisor by President Reagan. In 1991 President Bush appointed him

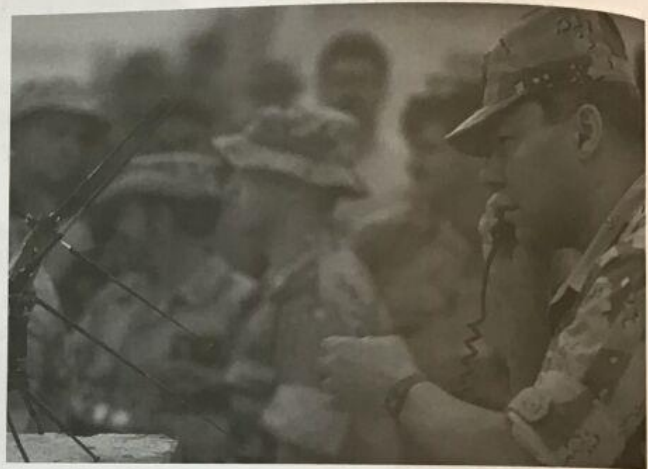
chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (the Joint Chiefs are the highest officers of each branch of the military). Powell retired from the military in 1993. In 2001, when President George W. Bush nominated him for Secretary of State and he was confirmed, Colin Powell achieved the highest government position of any African American to that time.



and further reduced for good behavior. (In July 2010 a French Court convicted Noriega of money laundering and sentenced him to seven years in jail. He had also been sentenced in Panama to 60 years in prison on various charges.) During the fighting and the aftermath an estimated 200-300 Panamanian civilians died, 314 PDF soldiers were killed, and 23 US troops lost their lives. Physicians for Human Rights estimated that 15,000 civilians lost homes and businesses. It was not until 1993 that the GDP of Panama returned to pre-invasion levels. Operation Just Cause was popular in the United States. President Bush gained a reputation as a deliberate, firm, and decisive leader. However, the United Nations and the OAS condemned Operation Just Cause as a violation of international law.

The Persian Gulf

On August 2, 1990, Iraq invaded Kuwait. The Iraqi army quickly overwhelmed the Kuwaiti Defenses and seized control of the country. The invasion was caused by a dispute over oil, Iraq having accused Kuwait of both stealing and overproducing oil. The Iraqi army had been massing on the border, and while it is unclear as to what message the Bush administration sent to Iraqi Dictator Saddam Hussein, it is most likely that neither the neighboring Arab states nor President Bush expected Iraq to do more than occupy the oil field in dispute. The day of the invasion the United Nations Security Council approved Resolution 660 demanding Iraq leave Kuwait and imposed economic sanctions four days later. That same day Saudi Arabia gave permission for the United States to put defensive forces in that country to defend against an attack. On August 8, Iraq announced that Kuwait was a province of Iraq. The annexation of Kuwait by Iraq caused great concern by the countries of Western Europe, the United States, and Japan, among other nations. The threat of Hussein controlling the vast oil supply of the Persian Gulf states comprised a large part of that concern.



Colin Powell, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, phoning the Pentagon, via satellite, while on duty in the Middle East.

Activity

President Bush and Operation Desert Storm

The following sources are related to Operation Desert Storm in 1991.

Source A

The January 16, 1991, speech by George Bush announcing the commencement of war against Iraq.

Just two hours ago, allied air forces began an attack on military targets in Iraq and Kuwait. These attacks continue as I speak. Ground forces are not engaged.

This conflict started August 2nd when the dictator of Iraq invaded a small and helpless neighbor. Kuwait—a member of the Arab League and a member of the United Nations—was crushed; its people, brutalized. Five months ago, Saddam Hussein started this cruel war against Kuwait. Tonight, the battle has been joined.



This military action, taken in accord with United Nations resolutions and with the consent of the United States Congress, follows months of constant and virtually endless diplomatic activity on the part of the United Nations, the United States, and many, many other countries. Arab leaders sought what became known as an Arab solution, only to conclude that Saddam Hussein was unwilling to leave Kuwait. Others traveled to Baghdad in a variety of efforts to restore peace and justice. Our Secretary of State, James Baker, held an historic meeting in Geneva, only to be totally rebuffed. This past weekend, in a last-ditch effort, the Secretary-General of the United Nations went to the Middle East with peace in his heart—his second such mission. And he came back from Baghdad with no progress at all in getting Saddam Hussein to withdraw from Kuwait.

Now the 28 countries with forces in the Gulf area have exhausted all reasonable efforts to reach a peaceful resolution and have no choice but to drive Saddam from Kuwait by force. We will not fail.

Source: "President George Bush Announcing War Against Iraq." January 16, 1991. *The History Place*. <http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/bush-war.htm>.

Source B

From *American History: A Survey* (1999) by Alan Brinkley, a textbook widely used in colleges in the United States.

After some initial indecision, the Bush administration agreed to join with other nations to force Iraq out of Kuwait ... Within a few weeks, Bush had persuaded virtually every important government in the world, including the Soviet Union and almost all the Arab and Islamic states, to join in a United Nations-sanctioned trade embargo of Iraq.

At the same time, the United States and its allies (including the British, French, Egyptians, and Saudis) began deploying a massive military force ...

And on February 23, allied (primarily American) forces under General Norman Schwarzkopf began a major ground offensive

Source: Brinkley, Alan. 1999. *American History: A Survey*. 10th edn. Boston: McGraw Hill. pp. 1131–32.

Source C

Text from *American President: An Online Reference Resource*, a website run by the Miller Center of Public Affairs at the University of Virginia.

Despite being somewhat caught off guard, the Bush administration went to work immediately trying to assemble a coalition to oppose Iraq. One fortunate turn of events for the administration was that, at the time of the invasion, President Bush was with Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher of Britain at a conference, and Secretary of State Baker was in Siberia with Eduard Shevardnadze, the Soviet foreign minister. This allowed the United States to issue strong condemnations against Iraq with Britain, and most surprisingly, the Soviet Union. James Baker credited this moment, when the United States and Soviet Union issued a joint statement condemning Iraq's actions, as the end of the Cold War because it marked the beginning of unprecedented cooperation between the United States and the Soviet Union.

When the invasion began, Arab countries joined with the United States to form a coalition to convince Iraq to withdraw from Kuwait or face the consequences. When Saudi Arabia became concerned about a possible invasion after Iraqi troops began to



mass on the border, President Bush announced the deployment of U.S. troops to the desert kingdom. He also articulated the four principles that guided “Operation Desert Shield”: the immediate and complete withdrawal of Iraq from Kuwait; the restoration of the legitimate Kuwaiti government; the stability and security of the Middle East; and the protection of Americans abroad.

On the day of the invasion, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 660, which condemned the invasion and demanded that Iraq withdraw “immediately and unconditionally”. The United States also quickly moved to freeze Kuwaiti and Iraqi assets. Shortly thereafter, the UN imposed economic sanctions on Iraq designed to try to convince Iraq to withdraw. The Iraqi invasion allowed President Bush to emphasize one of his greatest strengths—personal diplomacy. He had many international contacts, and he personally telephoned world leaders and U.S. allies to start building the coalition that would force Iraq to withdraw. However, the administration did not want Israel to join the coalition because it feared that Israel’s involvement would alienate the Arab countries that had already agreed to join the alliance. Israel agreed to stay out of the coalition and not retaliate if attacked in order to allow the coalition’s greater resources to deal with Hussein.

Source: “George H. W. Bush. Foreign Affairs.” *Miller Center of Public Affairs*. <http://millercenter.org/academic/americanpresident/bush/essays/biography/5>.

Source D

Cartoon by Nicholas Garland first published in *The Independent* (UK) September 12, 1990.



Source E

Lucy Webster, at the U.N. Department for Disarmament Affairs, agrees that as a result of the Gulf [War], international law has progressed from the status of “pious norms to norms taken seriously. Law is a question of expectations and enforcement really means the threat of enforcement. There was no reason for Saddam Hussein to expect the response that his invasion provoked. But now the whole context has been changed.”

Source: Yost, Jack. “The Role of the U.N. After Desert Storm: Rule of Law or Business as Usual?” *Peace Magazine*. May–June 1991. www.peacemagazine.org.



←
Questions

- 1 a What evidence is there in source A that the Bush administration made efforts to solve the conflict with Iraq without military action?
b What is the message of source D?
- 2 Compare and contrast the level of international involvement in sources B, and E.
- 3 With reference to origin and purpose, assess the values and limitations of sources A and D for historians studying the Gulf War of 1991.
- 4 Using the documents and additional research, assess the importance of George Bush in the international action against Iraq in 1990 and 1991.

The invasion was not only condemned by the United States and its allies, but also the Soviet Union, reflecting the budding relationship between the Gorbachev-led USSR and the United States after the 1989 fall of the Berlin Wall and the accompanying collapse of communist rule throughout Eastern Europe. When United States combat forces were deployed, Bush announced the four principles that would guide Operation Desert Shield: the immediate and complete withdrawal from Kuwait, the restoration of the Kuwaiti government, the stability of the region, and protection of US citizens. It was at this time that George Bush began to apply personal diplomacy and work the contacts he had developed over many years.

In the next few months the Kuwaiti government mounted a public relations offensive, spending millions of dollars in the United States to build a case for armed ejection of the Iraqis from Kuwait. Included in the campaign was the appearance of a 15-year-old Kuwaiti girl, identified only by her first name, later identified as the daughter of the Kuwaiti ambassador to the United States, who testified that Iraqi soldiers had gone into a hospital and dumped infants out of incubators, leaving the infants on the floor to die. The story was revealed to be a fabrication. But, it was repeated by the press, Amnesty International, and several times by the president himself. The Kuwaiti government was suspect on human rights, but by painting the Iraqis as purveyors of atrocities, (certainly there was ample evidence of Saddam Hussein's ruthlessness during the Iraq-Iran War and towards his own people) there was enough momentum to gain narrow approval by the Senate for the use of force to expel Iraq. Thanks to an effective PR campaign, presidential pressure, oil, the importance of Middle East stability, the United Nations Security Council's November 29 resolution authorizing "all necessary means," the US Congress approved the use of force on January 12. In the early morning on January 17 the United States began air attacks, including massive bombing, that lasted for more than a month. The ground war commenced on February 23 and on February 27 President Bush announced that Kuwait was liberated. A cease-fire with Iraq was arranged. On March 6 Bush stood before a joint session of the House and Senate declaring, "tonight Kuwait is free." On April 3, the Security Council passed a resolution making the cease-fire permanent. The UN also demanded that Iraq rid itself of chemical and biological weapons and never build weapons of mass destruction in the future. Iraq agreed to the UN's conditions and the war officially ended on April 6.

Discussion point

Leaders and nations

Compare the administration's approach to the actions of Panama's Manuel Noriega and Iraq's Saddam Hussein. How did President Bush distinguish between the citizens of the two countries and their leaders? Assess the policy statements and discuss the decisions made.

The president's popularity soared at the conclusion of Operation Desert Storm. There were few US casualties. Bush had led a coalition of nations, many providing manpower and some, including Japan, forbidden by its constitution from using its armed forces except for defense, provided significant funds. It was the first major operation of what Bush hoped would become the "new world order." Some were critical of Bush for halting the war before the Iraqi army was destroyed and Saddam Hussein removed, but Bush defended the cease-fire. The Security Council resolutions stated that Iraq had to withdraw to positions held on August 1, 1990, therefore there was no authority for the United States to continue into Iraq. Furthermore, removing Hussein could shift the balance of power in the region to the favor of Iran and if Hussein was removed the United States would be an occupying force for a long time, a state of affairs Bush did not want. Leaving Saddam Hussein in power did cause problems for the United States in future years.

The Soviet Union and Eastern Europe

To many observers the Cold War was already over when George Bush became president. Several increasingly friendly meetings between Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan had taken place in the preceding four years, and in 1988 the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan ended. Bush, who practiced caution and exhibited a calm demeanor in domestic affairs, exhibited a similar deliberateness when dealing with the Soviet Union. The slow approach was called *pauza* (meaning pause) by the Soviets. But events in the region proceeded rapidly, seemingly independent of the president. In 1989, the first year of the Bush presidency, Poland, East Germany, Hungary, Romania and the Baltic State gained independence from the USSR. Gorbachev let the satellite states break away, crucially revoking the Brezhnev Doctrine which, since 1968, advocated intervention to prevent any communist state from leaving the fold.

The timing and swiftness of the events of autumn 1989 caught the United States' Defense and Intelligence agencies and President Bush by surprise. While much of the western bloc boisterously rejoiced when the Berlin Wall came down, Bush maintained his typically unflappable demeanor. When criticized for his lack of passion and failure to make a Kennedy or Reaganesque grand speech befitting the fall of the symbol of the Cold War in the city that had been the focal point of more than four decades of tension, Bush explained that he did not want to give the hardliners in the Kremlin an excuse to get rid of Gorbachev and reverse the progress of the previous months by metaphorically dancing on the Berlin Wall.

The collapse of the Iron Curtain that ran through the middle of Germany brought discussions of how Germany would reunite. A number of issues, related to the past and the present affected negotiations. Among those were the Russian fear of a united Germany, the loss of East Germany's economy to the USSR, and the critical question of whether a united Germany would become a member of NATO as was West Germany, or become a neutral nation. The process that became known as "Two-plus-Four" (East and West Germany, plus the United States, France, Great Britain and the

U.S.S.R.) settled the disputes. The terms agreed upon were: Germany would join NATO but troops would not move onto former East German soil, Red Army units would have several years to leave, and Germany would provide monetary assistance to an economically weak Soviet Union, plagued by the expenses of the Afghanistan War, oil price fluctuations, and the loss of satellite nations.

It was not only the events of Eastern and Central Europe that saw diplomacy between the United States and the Soviet Union. Between the fall of the Berlin Wall and the culmination of negotiations over the future of Germany, Bush and Gorbachev met twice, once in December and again in June to negotiate the final terms of START (Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty). The treaty, signed at the July 1991 Moscow Summit, was a major, concrete step in negotiations that began in Reykjavik, Iceland, 1986, with the earnest discussions of Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan.

As hardliners within the Kremlin sought to turn back Gorbachev's reforms, Bush continued to support Gorbachev. A coup attempt in August (a month after the Moscow summit) failed, with Boris Yeltsin emerging as a hero of reform and rule of law. The USSR began to break apart as the Soviet Republics declared independence from the Kremlin. On December 21, the Alma-Ata Protocol was signed by representatives of all the Soviet Republics, declaring the end of the Soviet Union. Bush watched as Gorbachev, the man who thought he could save the communist state, resigned as president of the in-name-only Soviet Union on Christmas Day 1991.

With the Soviet Union no longer an enemy Bush employed his diplomatic skills in the attempt to build a new world order. The idea was to build multinational coalitions to deal with problems around the globe. It was a chance to move beyond the bipolar world that had resulted in destructive alliances based on communist or anti-communist ideology. Some members of the administration wanted Bush to seize the opportunity presented by the collapse of the USSR to assert a hegemony of power. Bush's instinct was to look for diplomatic solutions, but the "peace dividend" did not come about as there was not the expected significant reduction in defense spending. Bush tried to build coalitions to produce peace in the breakup of Yugoslavia, but the effort was fruitless as nationalist sides descended into war. Additionally, the president sent troops into Somalia, a nation in the midst of a civil war. The efforts at creating a new world order fell short as social, political, economic, ideological and cultural concerns and passions proved to be obstacles to an endeavor that recalled the efforts of Woodrow Wilson in Spring 1919.

China

While the Soviet Union was disintegrating, China was encountering problems of its own. The four modernizations had brought some improvements to the economy and in living conditions for the Chinese people. The late 1980s seemed to bring a more open society. But in 1989 the challenge to Deng Xiaoping's regime was too great, which led to the crackdown on a demonstration in Tiananmen Square. President Bush, a former envoy to China, found that a weakening USSR resulted in less leverage for the United States in

Activity

Role play

- Create groups of four or five:
- One person plays George H. W. Bush, one Mikhail Gorbachev, and two or three leaders of other countries (suggestions include, but are not limited to Cuba, Nicaragua, China, France, Egypt, Hungary, Israel, Iran, Nigeria, Poland, the UK etc).
- Each individual proposes a new world order that their country would support. After sharing proposals, the group creates a working definition and an outline of how it would operate.
- An alternative is for each group to represent a nation. The group would create a proposal for a new world order and present it as a PowerPoint. The class would debate the merits and possible results of each proposal.

Activity

Different eras

- Compare the policies and actions of President Eisenhower during the CIA-supported coup in Guatemala in 1954 and the Hungarian uprising in 1956 to the US response to the Tiananmen Square demonstrations in 1989. What actions did each president take? How important were the circumstances surrounding each event? Did circumstances dictate actions? Explain.

discussions with the Chinese leadership. In the first months of the administration the President had tried to work with the Chinese based on the traditional rivalry with the USSR, but was unsuccessful. Consequently, when Tiananmen occurred, the administration struggled for an effective response. Bush was concerned with the stability of the Chinese leadership and its control of the Chinese armed forces. In China, as opposed to Eastern Europe, force won and democracy lost. The Bush China policy worked with the understanding that cultivating a sound relationship with the Chinese military was critical for regional stability. To the vocal dismay of the Democrats in Congress who saw little reason to tolerate human rights violations on the part of the Chinese government, Bush seemed to abandon the push for democracy. The Bush condemnation of the Chinese crackdown was tepid in their eyes, but to the president, prudence left options that rash statements would have eliminated.

The United States **electoral system** requires a majority of electoral votes for a candidate to become president. Each state is allotted votes on the basis of number of representatives and senators. Most of the 50 states and the District of Columbia have “winner take all” elections, so it is possible for a candidate to win the majority of electoral votes without obtaining at least 50% of the popular vote.

President Bill Clinton, 1993–2001

Bill Clinton, the Democrat governor of Arkansas, a southern state, was little known outside his region when he began his run for the presidency. Clinton won the the nation’s highest office in a three-way contest with incumbent George Bush and Texas billionaire Ross Perot, who ran a folksy campaign focusing on patriotism, deficit reduction and economic issues, but the result was Clinton won an impressive majority of **electoral votes** but received only 43% of the popular votes cast.

Clinton, whose election campaign was based on the phrase, “It’s the economy, stupid,” was most interested in domestic policy, especially healthcare. Even though he had studied foreign policy at Georgetown, he focused on domestic issues in the light of the first presidential election after the fall of the Soviet Union. His presidency was marked by great failures and great triumphs in foreign policy, domestic policy and personal travails. Included in those episodes were Somalia, Bosnia, Kosovo, healthcare, deficit reduction, gay rights, racial, ethnic and gender diversity, economic prosperity, a technological revolution and market crash, and a presidential impeachment trial for only the second time in the history of the United States.

Domestic policies

Healthcare

Bill Clinton ran for president promising to reform healthcare. The United States was the only developed country in the world without a national healthcare system, and it was estimated that more than 50 million Americans had

William Jefferson Clinton (1946–)



Unlike his predecessor, Clinton did not come from wealth. His father died just before he was born, and his mother was an alcoholic, he was not a war hero (he had avoided the draft), was charismatic, personable, enjoyed domestic policy, and was quite polished. He had a good education: Georgetown University, Oxford University as a Rhodes Scholar, then Yale Law. He became the youngest governor in the country in 1978 at the age of 32, lost his reelection attempt, then came back to serve as governor for four additional terms. Clinton was part of the Democratic Leadership Council, a group of Democrats who were more moderate and tended towards a view that pragmatic policy formulation, combined with moderate liberalism was the way to get elected and to rule. They differed on key points with liberals in supporting capital punishment and championing welfare reform. A risky strategy for primary elections where the left wing of the party was most powerful, Clinton managed to secure the Democratic nomination for the presidency, despite allegations of marital infidelity and being labeled “Slick Willie” by his critics. After serving two terms as president of the United States, Clinton moved to New York and his wife, Hillary, won election to the United States Senate. Bill Clinton worked on many humanitarian projects following his eight years in office, including AIDS and Tsunami relief, joining with his predecessor, George H.W. Bush.

no health insurance. To Clinton this was unacceptable. Additionally, healthcare was taking up an increasingly large portion of the GDP, about 15%, and predicted to keep rising. Unlike many other industries in which technology had decreased costs, technological advances in medicine served to increase demands for new tests and procedures, and even if they reduced some costs, healthcare's share of the economy promised to grow. To Clinton and supporters, reforming healthcare would not only benefit millions of US citizens directly, but controlling costs would make the federal government debt manageable due to reduced Medicare projections in the decades to come. On the private side, it would enable companies to increase profitability and invest in new technologies, making the economy of the nation grow. There seemed to be little downside.

Despite this, there was great opposition to the plan. Republicans saw healthcare reform as a significant expansion of government, a potentially huge victory for the Clinton presidency and a catalyst for the Democrats that could bring "Reagan Democrats" back into the fold. Also, healthcare reform would bring massive change to a system that worked for a majority of the population. But the process of healthcare reform helped to feed the uncertainty. Clinton named his wife, Hillary, an accomplished attorney and former leader of education reform in Arkansas during Clinton's governorship, as head of the task force. The task force—appointed experts in medicine, managed care, and finance—met in private. Hillary Clinton's relationship with the president reportedly caused panel members to mute their criticism of proposals that she favored. To many citizens, it appeared that the Clintons were forming policy in a smoky back room that reminded many of corrupt old-style politics. When the proposal came out, it exceeded 1,000 pages. The president had wanted to present Congress with a complete plan that they could amend, rather than present specific goals and broad principles and let congressional committees hash out the details for months, if not years. A federal court forced the administration to make the records of the task force public, reinforcing the climate of distrust. President Clinton announced the proposal in a September 1993 speech.

Opposition to the healthcare proposal was fierce. Republicans led a coordinated attack. The plan was too big, too complex, and impossible to understand. It was a threat to big and small business alike. It would take away healthcare from those who had it. Americans would no longer get to choose their doctor. The famous "Harry and Louise" commercials, featuring a middle class, elderly couple concerned about losing their healthcare, an ad campaign sponsored by health insurance companies, served to persuade many people that the Clinton plan would make things worse. The suicide of White House aide, Vince Foster, a friend of Hillary Clinton's added to the climate of innuendo around the campaign for the plan. By mid-1994, it was clear that healthcare reform was going nowhere. Congressional mid-term elections were approaching, the Clinton administration was becoming increasingly unpopular and many Democrats up for reelection in both the House and Senate did not want to risk supporting the reform effort. Interestingly, opinion polls showed that the public supported many parts of the plan—except

Discussion point

Looking back in history

Following the First World War, Woodrow Wilson advocated in his 8 January 1918 "Fourteen Points" speech to a joint session of Congress that there should only be "Open covenants of peace, openly arrived at."

How open should governmental processes be in a democracy?

when Clinton's name was part of the question. Clinton had spent whatever political capital he had on reforming healthcare. The failure of the proposal was a huge defeat for his presidency.

The economy

When looked at as a whole, the eight Clinton years brought strong economic growth. There was low inflation, low unemployment and sustained increases in GDP averaging 4% per year. Worker productivity was on the increase. An ever-increasing federal deficit, despite the Bush budget deal, was converted into a budget surplus by the end of Clinton's second term. A look at economic data supports the strong economy of the Clinton era. In January 1993, when Clinton entered office, unemployment stood at 7.3%. Four years later it had dropped to 5.3% and when Clinton left office, unemployment stood at 3.9%.

The question is how much of the economic success was due to Clinton policies. Was he lucky or good or both? One argument is that the deregulation and policies of the Reagan-Bush years set the stage for sustained economic growth. But the legacy also included a massive federal debt. Clinton understood the need to get the federal budget under control. His first budget passed only because Democrats held majorities in both houses. The budget contained aggressive deficit reduction strategies. Several times during his presidency, especially when he was weakened by scandal, Republicans pressed for tax cuts as the deficit receded. Clinton resisted the pressure and pushed a second deficit reduction program in 1997.

The \$290 billion deficit that Clinton inherited became a \$124 billion surplus when he left. Many economists argue that as the federal government competes for loan dollars when it runs a deficit, decreasing the government's borrowing lowers interest rates by making more capital available for investment. Clinton, following the advice of Treasury Secretary Robert Rubin, followed a controversial policy of a strong dollar. Conventional wisdom said that to increase exports the dollar needed to be weak against other currencies, but the strong dollar allowed for a low-inflation economy and provided options for the inflation-averse Federal Reserve not to raise interest rates to slow the economic expansion.

Clinton also engaged other nations as he looked at the United States as a part of a global economy. Clinton promoted the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) against the voices of labor (traditionally strong supporters of Democrats), a treaty that George Bush had worked on, and it was approved by the Congress in 1993. He also supported the World Trade Organization (WTO) to encourage increased global commerce. The administration also provided funds to assist the Mexican and Asian economies, as well as through the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The assistance was unpopular domestically, on both the left and the right.

Welfare reform

The 1994 election was a rout in favor of Republicans. Voter anger at the healthcare debacle and ethical questions revolving around the Clinton administration resulted in the Republicans taking over the House and Senate. Newt Gingrich offered a "Contract with America"

Activity

President's policies

Remember to continue adding to the table you created at the beginning of the section on presidents' policies.

Activity

Online activity

"Harry and Louise"

Watch several "Harry and Louise" commercials on YouTube.

- 1 Identify the message of each advertisement. Then, describe the theme of the campaign.
- 2 What was the origin of the ads and what was the purpose?
- 3 Explain the values and limitations of the Harry and Louise campaign for historians studying the failure of healthcare reform during the 1990s.

Discussion point

Economic successes

Answer the following question:

- 1 To what extent were the economic successes of the Clinton administration the result of
 - a The actions of the two previous presidents
 - b Clinton's own policies
 - c Economic factors beyond the control of the president?

that promised smaller and more ethical government. Clinton was severely weakened and soon after the election he publicly claimed that he was "still relevant." The president's words seemed desperate. Faced with a hostile legislature, he had to change strategy. In 1995, he embraced welfare reform traditionally a Republican issue. Clinton said that it was time to move people from "welfare to work." When campaigning for election, Clinton referred to himself as a New Democrat, one who felt that the era of big government was over, but that government still had a positive role to play. To many Democrats, the promise to "end welfare as we know it" sounded like "blame the poor" rhetoric, but in a growing economy jobs were plentiful. Training was included as part of the legislation. Republicans wrote much of the bill. Federal aid to families with dependent children was replaced with block grants to states. The devolution from federal to state authority was a departure from traditional liberal policy. Clinton succeeded in getting the minimum wage raised. The **Earned Income Tax Credit** was expanded, too. Due to the growing economy and the new laws welfare rolls dropped by half.

The Earned Income Tax Credit provides tax credits (payments by the government even if an individual has not paid income taxes), providing an important additional incentive for workers to stay employed.

Diversity in government appointments

During the 1992 campaign Clinton said that he wanted a presidential cabinet that looked like the United States, meaning his cabinet secretaries would feature racial and ethnic minorities as well as women. Although he ran into trouble with two ill-considered nominees for Attorney General, the heads of the executive departments did indeed differ in background from previous administrations. Women took a prominent place in many parts of his administration: Janet Reno became the first female attorney general, Donna Shalala was appointed Secretary of Health and Human Resources, and Madeleine Albright was the first woman appointed ambassador to the United Nations, later becoming Secretary of State. Hazel O'Leary, the Secretary of Energy was African American, as was Dr Jocelyn Elders, the new surgeon general. Other women also occupied places of prominence in the administration. African American appointees included the Commerce Secretary, Ron Brown, the head of the Department of Agriculture, Mike Espy, and Jesse Brown, the new Secretary of Veterans Affairs. Two Hispanic Americans held cabinet positions: Henry Cisneros, the former mayor of San Antonio, Texas, became the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development and Federico Pena took over the Department of Transportation. Some critics make the point that Clinton's "New Democrat" policies rendered the appointments window-dressing, but the list is extensive and

Activity

Television drama

The West Wing TV series, created by Aaron Sorkin, that was originally broadcast on NBC from September 22, 1999 to May 14, 2006, features a fictional White House administration, loosely inspired by the Clinton era in government.

Choose an episode and reflect on the policies and personalities being discussed in relation to real life policies and issues in government in the 1980s and 1990s.



A White House cabinet meeting in January 1993.

Activity

President Clinton's impeachment

The following sources address issues surrounding the impeachment of President Bill Clinton.

Source A

Foes of the president further complained that he was so absorbed in protecting his hide that he was endangering national security. On August 7, Al Qaeda terrorists blew up the American Embassies in Kenya and Tanzania. On August 20, three days after his televised address, Clinton authorized retaliatory missile strikes in Sudan and Afghanistan, leading critics to charge that he was cynically using military firepower in order to divert attention from his personal excesses. Whether this was so was impossible to prove—Clinton said he acted to thwart terrorism—but there was no doubting his personal problems were consuming much of his time and that partisan battling over sex was hijacking the attention of Washington and the country.

Source: Patterson, James T. 2005. *Restless Giant: The United States from Watergate to Bush vs. Gore*. Oxford University Press.

Source B

I really think the way to think about the political legacy of Bill Clinton is to view it from the lenses of on the one hand and on the other. And let me give you a series of such tensions. I would submit, Bill Clinton is the most gifted American politician since FDR, in every respect, intelligence, policy, knowledge, political skill, capacity to relate to the American people. Yet, he was also the one who was impeached and almost driven from office. As Bob said, Bill Clinton presided over and contributed to a period of extraordinary prosperity, yet leaves office with a widespread sense of squandered opportunities, Belle identified two, the area of health reform, and social insurance reform. On the latter one might argue that the success of fiscal policy has indirectly improved the health of our social insurance system, yet alas he certainly intended to do more and would have, had other matters not overwhelmed him.

Source: Mann, Tom. "Assessing Bill Clinton's Legacy: How will History Remember Him?" *The Brookings Institution*. January 9, 2001. <http://www.brookings.edu/events/2001/0109elections.aspx>.

Source C

In the process of pursuing an impeachment of the President, the Republicans had seriously overplayed their hand. An indication of what lay ahead came when the party actually lost five seats in the House while gaining no Senate seats in the November 1998 elections conducted just prior to the impeachment vote. Traditionally, the opposition party registers significant gains in the off-year elections of a President's second term, and so the Republican loss was virtually unprecedented.

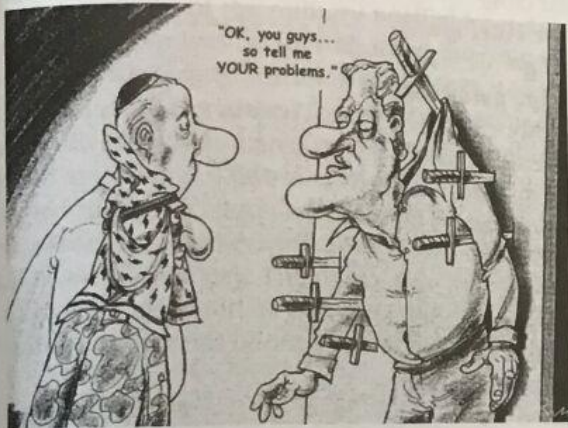
As the impeachment process unfolded, Clinton's ratings in public opinion polls were at an all-time high, hovering at close to 70 percent. Most Americans gave Clinton low marks for character and honesty. But, they gave him high marks for performance and wanted him censured and condemned for his conduct, but not impeached and removed. Many viewed key Republican attackers as mean-spirited extremists willing to



use a personal scandal for partisan goals. In the end, voters were happy with Clinton's handling of the White House, the economy, and most matters of public life. Hillary Clinton's public opinion poll ratings actually exceeded the President's, in large measure because of her dignified demeanor during those trying personal times, thus lifting her popularity to among the highest ever for a First Lady.

Source: "Domestic Affairs: William Jefferson Clinton." *American President: An Online Reference Resource*. The Miller Center of Public Affairs.
<http://millercenter.org/academic/americanpresident/clinton/essays/biography/4>.

Source D



Cartoon by Bill McArthur, featuring Benjamin Netanyahu, Yasser Arafat, and Bill Clinton. First published in *The Glasgow Herald*. December 14, 1998.

Questions

- 1 a What evidence is there in Source B that issues surrounding impeachment affected the actions of President Clinton?
- b What is the message of Source D?
- 2 Compare and contrast the views expressed in sources A and C on the effects of the impeachment scandal.
- 3 With reference to their origin and purpose, assess the values and limitations of sources B and C for historians researching the Clinton presidency.
- 4 Using the sources and your own knowledge, evaluate the affect of the Whitewater and Lewinsky scandals on the ability of Bill Clinton to carry out his policy goals.

Clinton did change the racial, ethnic, and gender paradigm for presidential appointments.

Impeachment and scandals

Bill Clinton was the only the second president in United States' history to be impeached. The previous impeachment involved Andrew Johnson, Abraham Lincoln's successor, and followed the greatest crisis in the nation's history: the Civil War. The Constitution provides for but one method to remove a sitting president from office, impeachment for "high crimes and misdemeanors." Impeachment by the House of Representatives followed by trial in the Senate is the greatest and ultimate check on the power of the chief executive. Clinton's troubles grew out of a series of allegations that began before the election and ranged from fiscal impropriety, womanizing, the suicide of aide Vince Foster, sexual relations with a White House intern, and perjury to cover up the affair.

The scandals themselves were peripheral to the policies of the president. However, the controversies, which spanned both terms, demanded significant attention from Clinton and his staff, and weakened the president in dealings with the legislative branch. Clinton was accused of attempting to distract the country by launching missile strikes – even his foreign policy initiatives were questioned by critics who cited the scandals. Many observers of United States politics claimed potential legislative accomplishments had gone unrealized because of the scandals. Thus, the allegations, which became known as *Whitewater*, are critical to understanding the Clinton presidency.

The main scandal, *Whitewater*, revolved around real estate investment linked with a Savings and Loan that involved close friends of the Clintons. Attorney General Janet Reno, the chief law enforcement officer of the federal government appointed a Republican as an **independent counsel**, but a three-judge panel felt that Reno, a presidential appointee, could not be sufficiently independent. Kenneth Starr, an attorney and former federal judge with numerous conservative connections, was appointed instead. Starr pursued his investigation with vigor and expanding resources. The investigation soon went beyond the limited *Whitewater* allegations to many aspects of Clinton's public and private life. To Clinton's critics the reach of Starr's investigation was appropriate for a man they believed had committed many crimes and abuses of power, but to supporters the Starr inquiries were a witch hunt. Due to the independent counsel law, people could be prosecuted for crimes unrelated to the original reason for the counsel's appointment. Starr defended the scope of the investigation as necessary for getting to the heart of Clinton's activities.

The investigation continued for several years without charges being brought. But, in 1997 the Supreme Court ruled that a lawsuit by Paula Jones against Clinton for sexual harassment while he was governor of Arkansas to go forward, disregarding arguments that it would distract the sitting president from his duties. Clinton's affair with intern Monica Lewinsky came to light. The independent counsel placed Clinton under oath and questioned him, reasoning that his behavior illustrated a pattern of illicit activity. The veracity, or lack thereof, of the president's testimony became the foundation of charges against Clinton. As evidence of Clinton's affair became public knowledge, the tawdriness of the affair affected the president's public standing. On 17 August 1998 Clinton gave a televised address in which he admitted to an affair he had previously adamantly denied, but disavowed directing any cover up.

Starr forwarded his report to the House of Representatives. After heated debate, two articles of impeachment were passed: perjury and obstruction of justice. The Senate trial took place in 1999. At times, the arguments became a surreal discussion of whether lying about sexual activity counted as a high crime or misdemeanor as intended by the Constitution's authors. In the end the Senate failed to convict the Clinton of either charge, with 45 of 100 members in favor of a perjury conviction and 50 voting that he was guilty of obstruction of justice (a two-thirds vote is required for a guilty verdict). There were two years left in the acquitted, but tainted, president's term. In

TOK Link Ethics

- 1 How are public ethics linked to private ethics?
- 2 To what extent are ethical codes situational rather than absolute?
- 3 How do ethics inform our expectations of people in public office? Research the history of issues of impeachment.

retrospect, the Supreme Court's ruling that allowed the sitting president to face a lawsuit greatly underestimated the amount of time, energy and attention the case would demand.

Homosexuals in the military

A discrimination issue that had some parallels to Harry Truman's order to ban racial segregation in the armed forces was Clinton's promise on winning the election to end the ban on homosexuals serving in the military. A court decision, however, forced Clinton to act on his promise early in his administration, before he had established sufficient credibility as a leader. Because Clinton had avoided serving in the military during the Vietnam era, his standing with the military and many veterans was low, and an effort to change the culture of the military needed a careful and timely approach. Clinton was neither afforded the time or the planning. Many other western countries armed forces had openly gay recruits, but the United States armed forces continued to exclude them. Conservatives, numerous veterans, and the military top brass opposed any changes, but after more than six months Clinton proposed "don't ask, don't tell," a policy that allowed homosexuals to serve in secret. A soldier could not reveal and the military could not ask if he or she was gay. The policy pleased few people. A more restrictive bill came out of Congress, but the essential elements of Clinton's compromise became the policy of the armed forces.

Foreign policies

Clinton came to the presidency focusing almost exclusively on the economy. Richard Haass, after counting presidential speeches and broadcasts, reported that the president spent 10% of his efforts on foreign policy. Given that Clinton was the first president elected since 1948 not to face the USSR in the long Cold War contest, it is understandable that his focus was on domestic affairs. For the first time in half a century, there was not a specific international target—no Germany, Japan or USSR—on which to focus. Near the end of his term, George Bush attempted to forge a new world order, and the new president would have an opportunity to create a new US foreign policy. But, as Clinton found out, foreign affairs have a way of becoming unpredictably significant and time-consuming.

The civil war in Somalia, an attempt to oust Haiti's dictator Raoul Cedras, the Bosnian-Serbian and Albanian-Serbian conflicts in the Balkans, and Rwanda's vicious civil war were some of the challenges the Clinton administration faced. There was the opportunity to work with nations of the former Soviet Union to limit and secure nuclear weapons. North Korea's missile and nuclear weapons programs were also a developing threat. Clinton continued the efforts of US presidents to find a solution to the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict, and was responsible for enforcing sanctions on Iraq's Saddam Hussein. There were terrorist attacks on New York's Twin Towers and a US navy ship in Yemen. Reemerging democracies in Latin America along with trade negotiations and financial interventions were also to occupy Clinton. Along the way, the Clinton foreign policy team developed the doctrine of enlargement: expanding market democracies, free trade, developing and

Activity

Ranking the three presidents

Ranking presidents is a favorite activity of many historians.

- 1 Using the information from your presidential policies table, examine each president's successes and failures.
- 2 Decide the extent to which outside events influence or interfered with presidential actions.
- 3 Examine the domestic goal of the presidents upon entering office and evaluate the extent to which each accomplished his objectives.
- 4 Based on those three factors, rank the presidents.

supporting multinational alliances, and a policy of intervention that became known as the Clinton Doctrine. Clinton, explaining why the United States was at times involved in places seemingly beyond the scope of the US national interest, said: "... what are the consequences to our security of letting conflicts fester and spread. We cannot, indeed, we should not, do everything or be everywhere. But where we can make a difference, we must be prepared to do so." For a man elected to fix domestic problems, a full foreign affairs agenda faced the new president.

Africa

Unexpectedly, two nations in Africa, Somalia and Rwanda, became part of the United States' foreign policy portfolio. U.S. policies in each nation were largely unsuccessful and brought a great deal of criticism: involvement in Somalia and a lack of involvement in Rwanda.

U.S. involvement in Somalia began in August 1992, six months before Clinton took office. Beginning with food delivery, the U.S. joined a United Task Force (UNITAF) of almost 40,000 soldiers from twenty countries in December to provide needed security in the war-torn nation. The task force, including 26,000 U.S. troops, operated in Somalia until May 1993. An effort followed to create a manageable situation for Somalis. The United States reduced troops to 4,000, but violence grew in Somalia. Different Somali factions drove through the streets in "technicals," pick-up trucks armed with a large machine gun or recoilless rifle mounted in the bed, intimidating residents and seizing food intended for distribution. U.S. soldiers attempted to provide protection from the warlords. As violence increased, Clinton added marines, but in a limited mission soldiers were not provided with all the weaponry and equipment necessary for success and safety. In October 1993, in an incident that became known as Black Hawk Down from a book by Mark Bowden (and subsequent 2001 movie), a battle in central Mogadishu resulted in U.S. casualties and images of dead US marines being dragged through the streets.

The United States, along with United Nations forces, withdrew over the next six months. Somalia descended into further disarray with warlords assuming control in the absence of foreign forces. Critics of the president called Somalia a fiasco while supporters, still admitting a failed mission, blamed the previous president for getting into the mess. The first major Clinton foreign policy mission failed to achieve even limited goals.

Trade

Regional and global trade advancement was an important component of Clinton's economic and foreign policies. Important trade negotiations included NAFTA, GATT, WTO, and fast-track action on trade with China. For most of his two terms Clinton advocated removing trade barriers and pushing for increased global commerce with fewer restrictions. This policy antagonized traditional Democratic groups, including labor unions and environmental groups.

Activity

Research

For what reasons did the United Nations Security Council choose to withdraw the vast majority of peacekeeping forces in Rwanda?

TOK Link Language

What is genocide? In your judgement were the mass killings in Rwanda genocide? Why do labels matter?

Discussion point

To what extent is Tony Lake's statement that the United States could not solve "other people's problems" consistent with US foreign policy in the 20th century?

NAFTA As a presidential candidate Clinton had pledged to support the Bush-initiated North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), a trade agreement between Canada, Mexico, and the United States. Upon entering the White House he did so. Opposition was fierce, and included Ross Perot who claimed that factories would leave the United States for cheaper labor in Mexico, taking millions of jobs with them. Congress approved the pact, a commitment to regional economic integration. NAFTA presented Mexico with the opportunity to attract new foreign investment. Environmental provisions were also included, a concern of environmentalists who felt that polluting industries would simply relocate to the countries with the least restrictive environmental regulations. The administration hoped that NAFTA would stimulate Mexico's economy, stabilizing the Salinas government. NAFTA met with a mixed reception in Mexico as in response the Zapatista National Liberation Army rose up in the state of Chiapas. Overall, NAFTA was an early success, as trade increased more than 20% in the first year alone.

GATT Clinton hoped that NAFTA would provide leverage for the 1994 General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) negotiations with Europe and Japan. GATT was a set of international commerce rules with enforcement provisions. The goal was to increase trade between countries by reducing trade barriers in an equitable manner. GATT was to open new markets and reduce the price of imports, allowing the US economy to grow in ways not possible in eras of tariff wars and trade barriers. The result of the negotiations was the creation of the new World Trade Organization (WTO) by 75 GATT members. GATT was ended and the WTO officially began on in 1995.

WTO The WTO was formed as an organization to regulate trade between member nations. It had enforcement powers. But the purpose of the WTO was to stimulate greater international commerce. The third WTO conference, held in Seattle, Washington, started on November 30, 1999. Clinton, in preparation for the meeting issued an executive order that forced the government to review the environmental effects of trade agreements. In line with his executive order, Clinton did emphasize the need for environmental protection, core international labor standards, and for the WTO to open its inner-workings to public scrutiny. But, he informed the public that global trade was expanding and the United States needed to be at the forefront. Clinton told supporters that the United States had 4% percent of the world's population and 22% of its wealth; consequently, it had to offer worthwhile incentives to other countries.

Huge protests of crowds upwards of 40,000 broke out in Seattle during the week of the WTO event. To those who protested, the WTO facilitated a "race to the bottom," and rather than raising standards of living in developing countries it was in the process of lowering standards everywhere. Reinforcing national control over trade united the isolationist right and the liberal left in challenging the president's support for the organization. Clinton angered his advisors with his call for labor and environmental standards. The protests did not shut down the meeting, but in the United States Seattle is viewed as the beginning of a sustained challenge to unfettered globalization.

Discussion point

Economic sovereignty

Two critical components of a nation state's authority are political and territorial sovereignty. In what ways and to what extent is economic sovereignty critical to the survival and success of a state?

Clinton, undeterred by Seattle, looked across the ocean to the emerging market of China and, ignoring China's human rights violations, granted Permanent Normal Trading Partner status to China the following year, easing China's entry into the WTO.

Europe

After the breakup of the Soviet empire, many parts of Europe were in turmoil. Economic and political integration caused uncertainty in many former countries of the Soviet Bloc. One such area was the former Yugoslavia. In 1992, Serbia and Bosnia-Herzegovina took up arms against each other. The Serbs quickly gained the advantage and took Bosnian towns, burning homes and killing and raping civilians. As the world watched atrocities, NATO and the United States did little to stop the war. Against the advice of many foreign policy advisors, stating that involvement was not of US national interest, the Clinton administration embarked on efforts to stop the war in the Balkans. The United Nations declared "safe areas" but the Serbian armed forces disregarded enclaves and continued killing. By 1995, the Clinton administration tired of the violence, pushed NATO to act. Led by the United States, NATO repeatedly bombed Serbian positions. The September air raids had the desired effect, driving the Serbian leader, Slobodan Milosevic, to negotiations. The talks took place in Dayton, Ohio, in November and the Dayton Accords were signed in Paris the following month. Clinton sent 20,000 troops to enforce the agreement. The troops succeeded in keeping peace and setting the stage for elections in 1996.

Serbia did not stop its war-making with the Dayton Accords. Serbia entered into a conflict in the province of ethnic Albanian dominated Kosovo. After attacks by the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA), the superior-armed Serbian army began an offensive, resulting in the deaths of numerous civilians. Atrocities by the Serbians, resulting in thousands of dead Albanians, again came to the attention of the international community. After repeated attempts to come to an agreement with Milosevic to stop the fighting, in 1999, NATO undertook a 79-day bombing campaign against Serbia. Again, Milosevic was driven to negotiate by superior force. With the Russians participating in talks, Serbia agreed to withdraw from Kosovo. The United States, United Kingdom, France and Russia provided troops as peacekeepers.

With the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact, the Clinton administration worked for a safer and stable Europe. A topic of great concern was the disposal of nuclear weapons and the stock of weapons-grade material. Working with Senator Sam Nunn, a legislator known for defense expertise, and his Republican counterpart, Richard Lugar, the administration provided for monitoring and securing of nuclear power plants, dangerous materials, and the dismantling of nuclear weapons. Additionally, Clinton supported IMF loans to Russia and Russia's President, Boris Yeltsin, even as Yeltsin faded in popularity and reports of corruption increased. Finally, several former Warsaw Pact countries, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic, became members of NATO, with the caveat that no NATO weapons or troops enter those countries. The deal was similar to the Two-Plus-Four agreement over the unification of Germany.

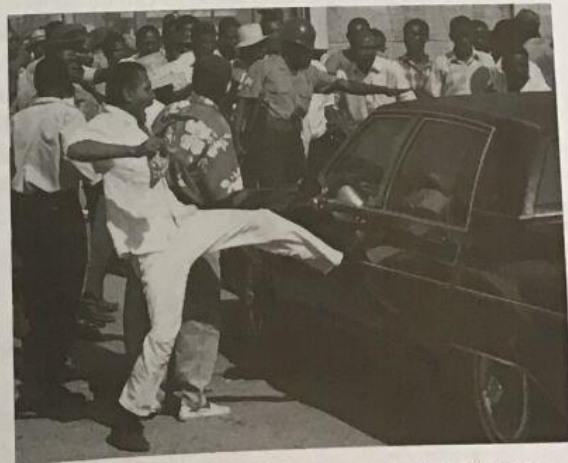
Latin America

The Clinton administration entered office with NAFTA in process and with a military dictatorship in Haiti. The majority of nations in South and Central America were well on their way to establishing, reestablishing and strengthening democratic governments. The new administration appeared more reactive to events than proactive. Some analysts felt Clinton reacted to the pressure of interest groups and media exposure rather than a thought-out plan. Latin America did not command the attention of the administration. Secretary of State Warren Christopher did not visit Latin America until 1996. One exception to the pattern was the Summit of the Americas in December 1994. In addition to NAFTA, the Clinton Presidency can take credit for removing a military dictatorship in Haiti, rescuing the Mexican economy from the "Peso Crisis," and working towards a free trade Americas.

Clinton's foreign policy flexibility was weakened from January 1995, when both the Senate and House were under Republican control. Among the actions of the new congressional leadership was the reduction of foreign aid by more than 20%. Congress added additional conditions: it directed the State Department to certify a country as cooperating in the drug war to be eligible to receive aid. Clinton chose to continue the anti-drug focus of the nation's Latin American policy, but did change emphasis from drug interdiction to eradication and cartel-busting. While the Clinton Doctrine implied a cohesive policy in Latin American to strengthen democracies and expand markets, it can also be viewed as a series of individual events dealt with as circumstances permitted.

Haiti posed a difficult problem for the new president. Haitian refugees floating to the United States on boats and rafts had been prevented from reaching shore by the Coast Guard and returned to Haiti by the Bush administration. The sitting president took no steps to restore Jean-Bertrand Aristide to power. During his election campaign Clinton took the position of restoring Aristide to power, criticizing Bush for denying refugees of the dictatorial regime asylum. But, after winning the election, he reversed his position in response to media reports that thousands of Haitians were about to get in homemade boats to flee to the United States. The United Nations worked out an agreement with the regime to allow Aristide to return. In October 1993, UN and US forces were confronted by Haitian paramilitary forces and not allowed to come ashore. Talks stopped soon after. By June 1994, Clinton realized that diplomacy without the threat of force was useless. It took further pressure from political allies for the president to act. Clinton took the lead in persuading the UN Security Council to pass a resolution authorizing the use of force to restore Aristide to Haiti's presidency.

Clinton also decided that US forces would lead the invasion. In a September speech, Clinton announced that every diplomatic effort had been rejected by the military commander in chief of



An anti-Aristide protester kicks the car carrying US diplomat Vicki Huddleston on 11 October, 1993, in Port-au-Prince, Haiti, after the car was not allowed entry to the sea port to welcome UN troops. The protesters shouted that they would not allow an occupying force in their country.

Haiti, Raoul Cedras. In the same speech he demanded the Haitian ruler and military supporters relinquish power immediately. Within a day, after arrangements by former president Carter, a meeting of the military leaders and Carter, Democratic Senator Sam Nunn, and General Collin Powell took place. Two days later the negotiators reached an agreement that allowed Aristide to return to power. A hitch came when Cedras was informed that US forces were about to invade, but Clinton called off the invasion and the agreement was signed. Eventually, after further negotiations, 20,000 US soldiers came ashore to secure Haiti. On October 15, Aristide was reinstated as president. Clinton's efforts resulted in the restoration of a fledgling democracy. Two years later, US troops left Haiti.

Summit of the Americas

In December 1993, the Clinton administration decided to follow up on NAFTA with a meeting of the heads of the 34 leaders of Latin American democracies—the Summit of the Americas. The meeting took place in Miami a year later, just after the Republican election landslide. To the Clinton Administration, the summit was an advancement of both domestic and foreign policy. The focus on the economy demanded expanding markets for domestically produced goods and the evolving Clinton Doctrine added promotion of democracy to the first priority. The Summit of the Americas was a prime opportunity.

The summit was a gathering of the leaders of 33 democratic states of the Americas and President Salinas of Mexico, a one-party state. By the December 1994 conference, the countries of the region had reduced trade barriers by 80% through a variety of trade pacts. The summit itself resulted in a Declaration of Principles supporting democracy, economic integration, free trade, and sustainable development. There was an agreement to create a Free Trade Area of the Americas by 2005. The goal was an ambitious one, and Clinton was unable to convince the Republican-led Congress to confirm the agreement or work toward the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA).

Bills Clinton's triumphs and setbacks can be viewed as symptoms of an ad-hoc foreign policy, or as a developing policy of enlargement and engagement constrained by an uncooperative Congress. Confronted with wars and violence on several continents, an uncertain economic world, and absence of the stability of a bi-polar world, Clinton's foreign policy legacy is still debated.

Activity

Summing it up

- 1 Complete the presidential policies table.
- 2 Review the information. Look for themes in both domestic and foreign policy that carry through two, or all three administrations.
- 3 Decide on the most significant successes and failures of each president.
- 4 Outline answers to the following questions:
 - a To what extent and in what ways did the foreign policy of the United States change because of the disintegration of the Soviet Union?
 - b The domestic policies of the three presidents were more evolutionary than revolutionary. Discuss.

Activity

Comparing doctrines

- Using a Venn Diagram, compare the foreign policy doctrines of Reagan, Bush, and Clinton.
- Draw a circle for each president and place policies where they intersect (and with which world regions) and where they do not.

Activity

A poster presentation

- Review the human rights policies and actions of the Reagan, Bush and Clinton administrations toward Latin American military dictatorships. Choose one president and, using specific examples, create a poster either praising or criticizing his human rights focus.