Reagan and the Cold War

- Staunch opposition to communism.
- He labeled the Soviet Union the “Evil Empire”
- He did not pursue Détente.
- Some feared he could set off WWIII
- Reagan sought peace by building up nuclear arms and missiles: This increased defense spending
- Angered Soviets boycotted 1984 Olympics.
- SDI Strategic Defense Initiative: A shield of lasers in space to stop Soviet missile attacks: It was mocked and called Star Wars
- It was an expensive pipe dream of Reagan.

1980’s Soviet Union

- By the late 1970’s the Soviet economy was shrinking. Industrial and farm output dropped.
- Corruption spread in the Soviet Union
- Solidarity: Was a strike by workers in Poland, Soviets could not stop it showing their weakness.
- 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev came to power; He saw the only way to save the Soviet Union was to cut military spending, but in order to do that he would have to make peace with the USA.
- 1984 Reagan was reelected and he was more open to peace
- USA and the Soviets had a series of 4 summits to talk peace. The INF treaty came about. It agreed to dismantle 2,500 nuclear missiles. The Cold War was coming to an end.
Essential Questions
1. How did Reagan refer to the Soviet Union?
2. How did Reagan think he could defeat the Soviet Union?
3. Why did people mock SDI?
4. Why was Mikhail Gorbachev so important in the Cold War?

Trouble in Latin America
- Reagan supported anti-communist regimes in Latin America even though some were repressive.
- He felt the Soviets were behind Marxism here
- In 1979 a Marxist group called the Sandinistas took over Nicaragua.
- Reagan had the CIA train and arm a group called the Contras to fight against the Sandinistas.
- When Congress heard about secret CIA mission in Nicaragua they banned any more
- In El Salvador Reagan sent aid to stop a Marxist regime from gaining support.

World affairs
- Reagan felt there needed to be stability in the Middle East
- Lebanon: Israel started a war in Lebanon trying to get rid of the PLO, a terrorist group.
- America sent a peace-keeping force to Lebanon: A suicide bomber drove his truck into a marine barracks and killed 241 troops. Reagan decided to bring the troops home.
- In Grenada America sent 5000 marines to stop a communist take-over thought to be sponsored by Cuba.
- South Africa: Many Americans urged US not to do business there because of Apartheid:
- In 1986 Congress overrode a Reagan Veto to make an Anti-Apartheid Act.
Iran-Contra Affair

- In Lebanon, Americans were being kidnapped by pro-Iranian groups.
- Reagan wanted to continue funding Contras in Nicaragua.
- The two became intertwined in 1985.
- **Iran-Contra Affair**: America sold weapons to Iran in exchange for their help freeing hostages; The money from those sales was then secretly diverted to the Contras in Nicaragua.
- This went against **Reagan's policy of negotiating with terrorists and the Congress's ban of involvement in Nicaragua**.
- A Water-gate like investigation ensued.
- **Reagan claimed he didn’t** know: Oliver North and members of Reagan’s team were convicted for this.

Essential Questions

1. Who were the Sandinistas and Contras?
2. How did Iran and Nicaragua become connected?
3. What principles and laws did the Iran-Contra Affair violate?
4. Who was convicted for the Iran-Contra Affair?