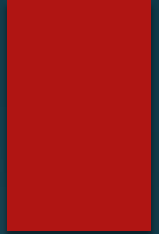




# Time to End the Tension



# MEET THE MAIN PLAYERS



# Ronald Reagan



**An actor who was 40<sup>th</sup> President of the United States from 1981 to 1989.**

# Pursuing Détente: 1963-1979

- ▶ **Détente:** relaxing of tensions between the US and the USSR.
- ▶ Both sides followed policy of détente after the Cuban Missile Crisis scare.
- ▶ The goal was better relations between the 2 superpowers and relaxation of arms race.
- ▶ Détente was replaced by...

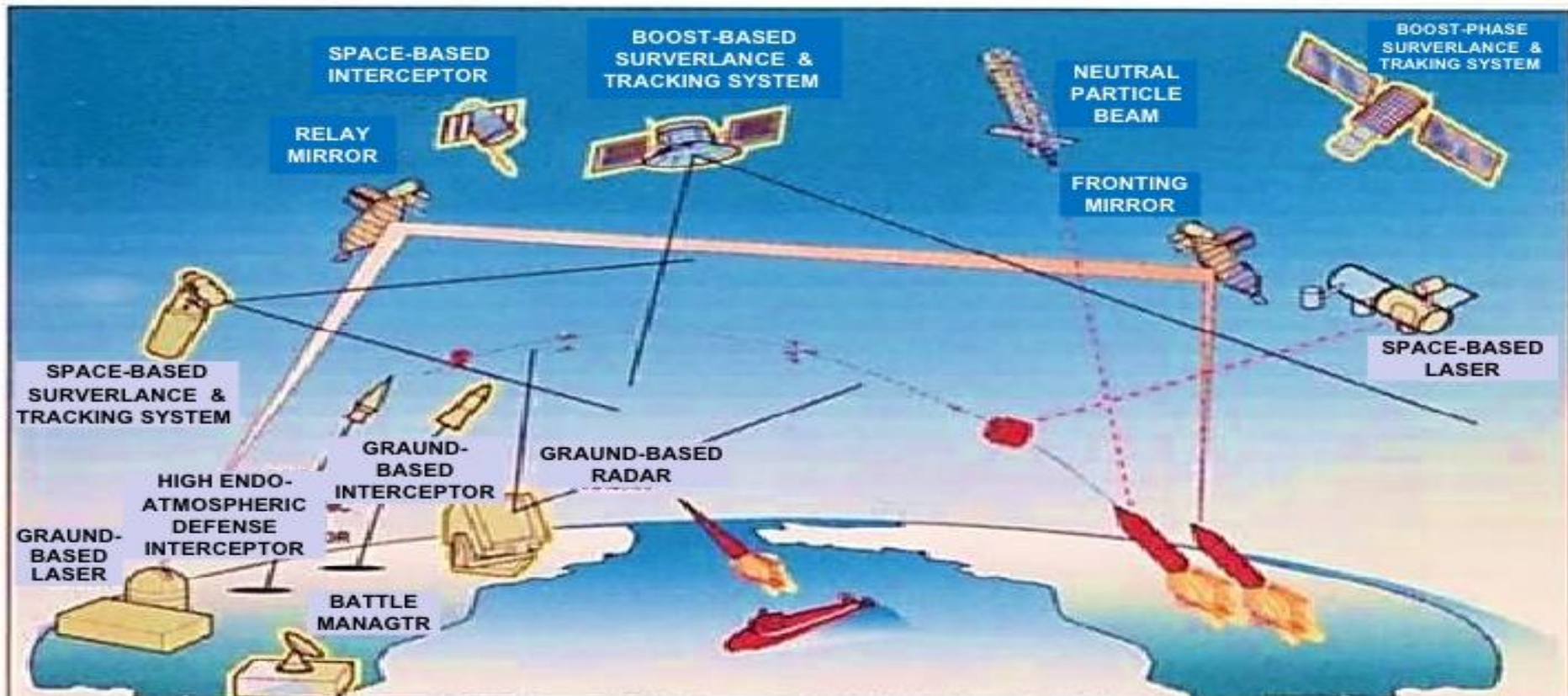
# The New Arms Race: Star Wars



# Star Wars = Strategic Defense Initiative

- ▶ Pres. Reagan sought to put **missiles in space that would defend against a Soviet nuclear attack.**
- ▶ This would make nuclear war “winnable” and give the US the advantage.
- ▶ The project would cost **\$\$BILLIONS!!**

## US SDI PROGRAM

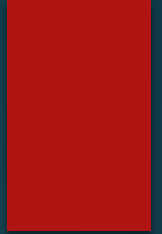


The purpose of SDI program was to create a Missile Defense System protecting the USA and its allies from a Soviet nuclear missile strike .





# What are the Soviets to do?



# Mikhail Gorbachev



**Was a former Soviet statesman. He was the 8<sup>th</sup> and last leader of the Soviet Union, having served as General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1985 until 1991 when the party was dissolved.**

# Mikhail Gorbachev



- ▶ 1985 became new Soviet leader.
- ▶ He recognized the communist system could not keep up with new arms race and the USSR was behind most other countries.

# Why did the Cold War End in the late '80s?

1. The expense of the nuclear arms race.
2. Gorbachev's reforms in the USSR.

**His plan for reform included 2 policies:**

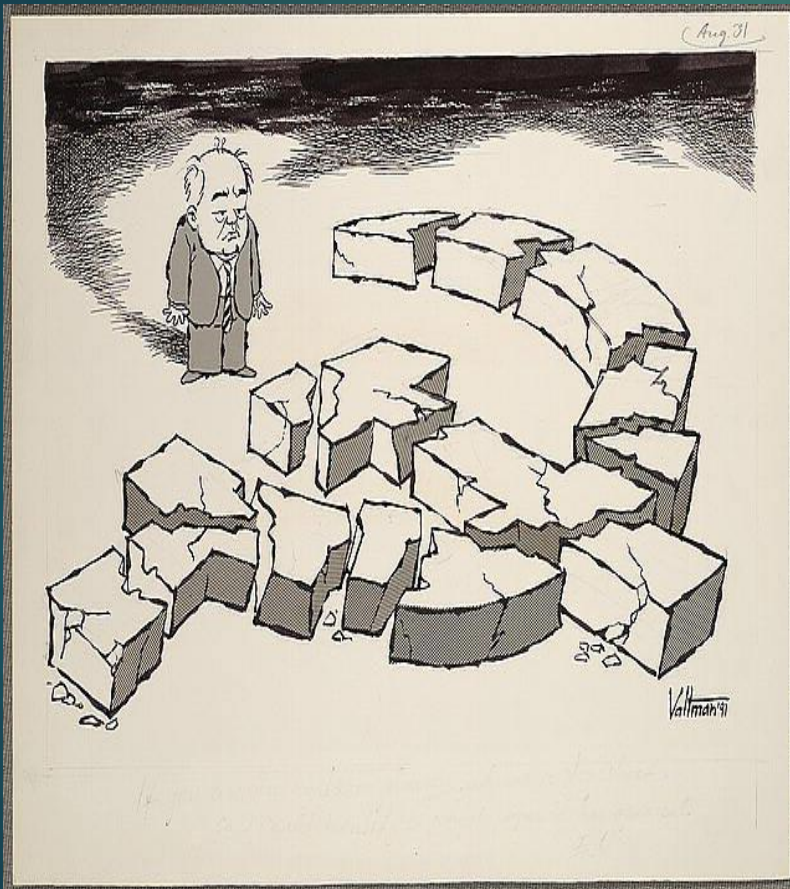


# 1. Perestroika:



- ▶ **Economic** reform.
- ▶ Introduced capitalism to Soviet Bloc countries.
- ▶ Recognized communism produced inferior products and made for economic slump.
- ▶ Made strikes legal.

# 2. Glasnost:



- ▶ Means “**openness.**”
- ▶ Introduced **free speech** and the publication of information.
- ▶ Allowed people to criticize the communist system for the first time.



# Note:

- ▶ The new policies contributed to better relations with the west.
- ▶ President Reagan and Gorbachev met several times to discuss nuclear arms reduction.
- ▶ Reagan knew he had the advantage - the Soviet economy could not compete.



- ▶ Gorbachev was credited with ending the Cold War and ushering in a new era of peace.

Reagan and Gorbachev  
meet in Moscow in 1988




**“The world will not accept dictatorship or domination.” - Mikhail Gorbachev**


# The Collapse of the Soviet Union



- ▶ Gorbachev's reforms led people in the Eastern Bloc to want more freedoms.
- ▶ In 1989 he introduced free elections.
- ▶ Countries soon wanted their independence from the USSR.
- ▶ Many gained independence but they faced new challenges...

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- ▶ Encouraged by the new freedoms, Soviet Bloc countries acted quickly to announce their independence.
  - ▶ 1 by 1, they became capitalist democracies while Moscow did nothing to stop them....

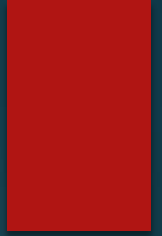




*“Poland, 10 years. Hungary, 10 months. East Germany, 10 weeks. Czechoslovakia, 10 days. Romania, 10 hours.”*

- **Prague graffiti commenting on the speed with which communism was toppled.**

# Was it All Good?





# Economic and Social problems

- ▶ Food prices soared as ruble became worthless.
- ▶ Couldn't compete in world markets.
- ▶ Hyperinflation hit most areas.
- ▶ People had to adjust to multi party system.
- ▶ **Many countries became westernized - some plunged into civil war (Yugoslavia)**

# Case Study: Germany



- ▶ Germany had long been a source of Cold War tensions since its division in 1945.
- ▶ In 1989, the most visible symbol of the Cold War was destroyed....
- ▶ After the Soviets withdrew support for East Germany, the country reunited in 1990.

# Oh what a night...

Berlin 1961



Berlin 1989



# Problems with German Reunification

1. Huge **discrepancies between the standards of living** of the 2 countries.
  - ▶ The West had become prosperous & strong.
  - ▶ The East had been backward and was unable to compete in global economy.
  - ▶ Unemployment soared.

- 
2. **Years of government control** left East Germans unprepared to find jobs and pay market value for food, etc.
  3. West Germans had to **absorb new debts** of East Germany.
  4. **Increased immigration** during high unemployment led to increased ethnic violence.