



# The End of the Cold War

# How far was Gorbachev responsible for ending the Cold War?

 **Mission:** to analyse + evaluate sources ( and linked videos ) to understand why the Cold War ended.



## Why did the Soviet Union lose control of Eastern Europe ?

In 1980 few living in Eastern Europe would have predicted what would happen in the next 10 years. Soviet Union and communist puppet rulers in Eastern Bloc countries were in total control and had no intention of releasing their grip. However, several factors changed the course of history. These would include the emergence of important figures such as Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan as well as events in different parts of the Eastern Europe. Finally the USSR was embroiled in a war in Afghanistan this conflict would also play a role.

**The role of Gorbachev**

**The role of Reagan**

**Events in Eastern Europe**

**Weaknesses of Communism**

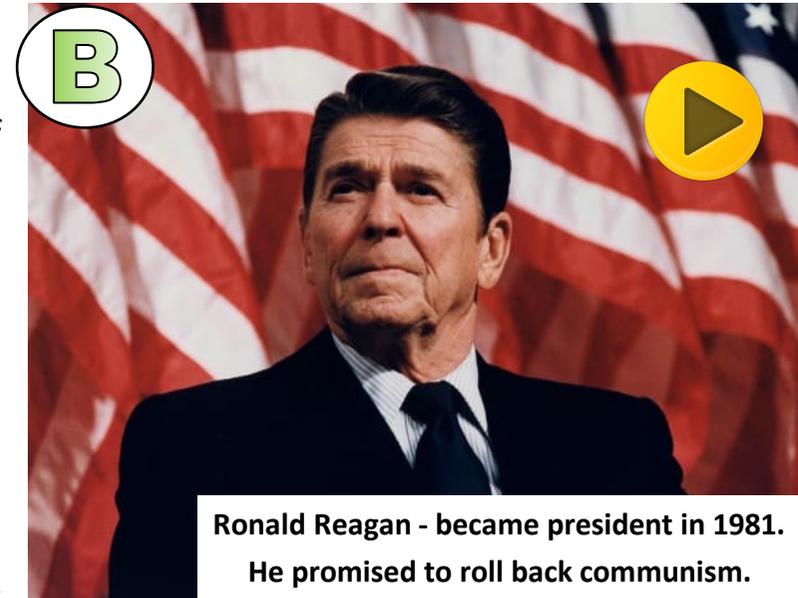
**Soviet defeat in Afghanistan**

In 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev became Soviet leader. He realised that the USSR could no longer compete with the USA in the arms race, if the Soviet economy was to survive.

Gorbachev wanted to modernise the USSR. He needed to stop so much money being spent on the arms race, so needed to improve relations with the USA. Living standards in the USSR were falling while in the West they were rising rapidly.

**BBC History.**

**A**

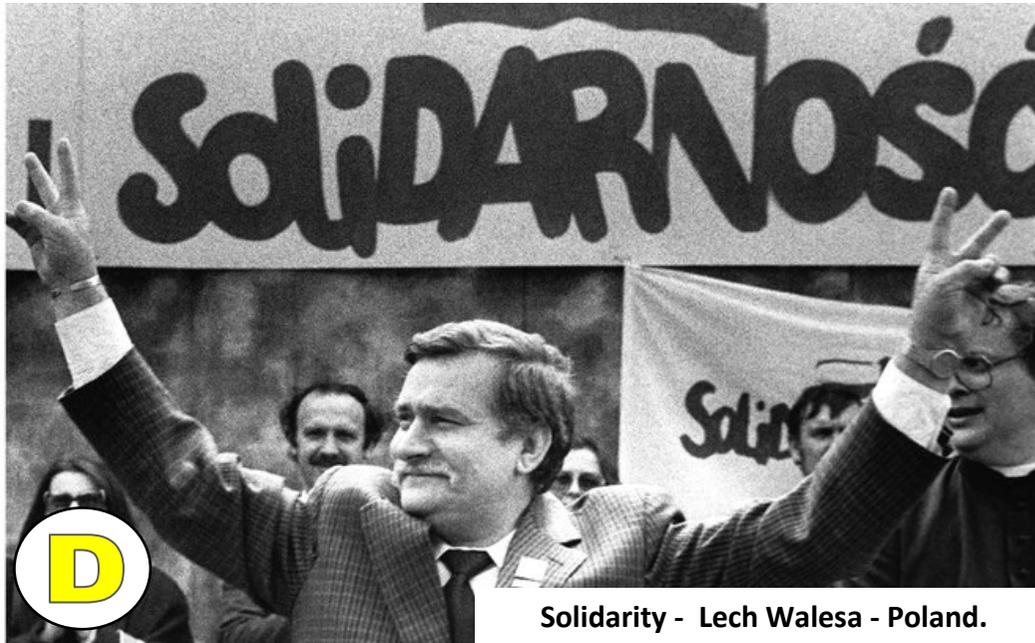


**Ronald Reagan - became president in 1981. He promised to roll back communism.**

*'The Polish economy continued to decline. In 1988 protests again spread throughout the country. Many workers illegally went on strike. This led to talks between the Solidarity leadership and the Polish government. By early 1989, an agreement was made to hold new elections with a reduced influence for the communists guaranteed. Solidarity was legalised and was able to form a coalition without the Communist Party, establishing an anti-communist government'.*



**BBC History**



**Solidarity - Lech Walesa - Poland.**

Reagan's aggressive stance toward the Soviet Union became known as the Reagan Doctrine. Advocating a peace through strength policy, Reagan declared that the Soviets must be made to understand we will never compromise our principles and standards [nor] ignore the facts of history and the aggressive impulses of an evil empire. To do so would mean abandoning the struggle between right and wrong and good and evil. Reagan proposed a policy that went beyond the Truman Doctrine of containment, urging active intervention. He vowed to increase U.S. military spending and to use force if necessary to roll back communist expansion in Third World nations.

**History.com**



**Crushed in 1956 but a Hungarian revolution in 1989 was successful.**

Thousands of people were leaving East Germany for the West through Hungary, making the Berlin Wall ineffective.

The USSR was not prepared to send in forces. As a result the East German government was forced to consider opening the border.

On the night of the 8th November, 1989 the border was opened and the Berlin Wall, which had become a symbol of Soviet oppression, was brought down.

**BBC History**



‘Polish, Hungarian and Romanian dogs got to talking. “What’s life like in your country?” the Polish dog asks the Hungarian dog.

“Well we have meat but we aren’t allowed to bark. What are things like where you are from?” says the Hungarian dog to the Polish dog.

“With us, we have no meat but at least we can bark” replied say’s the Polish dog.

“What’s meat?” What’s barking?” asks the Romanian dog.

**Eastern European anti-communist jokes from the 1980s.**



‘Following investigations into the 1956 revolt and a change in leadership, the Hungarian government decided to re-introduce multi-party democracy and hold elections In Autumn 1989, the border with Austria was opened and free movement was allowed. Many fled to the West from Hungary and East Germany.’

**BBC History.**



On November 9, 1989, following revolutions in Poland + Hungary, the East Berlin’s Communist Party announced that starting at midnight its citizens would be allowed to cross the country’s borders. East + West Berliners flocked to the wall, drinking beer and champagne and chanting “Open the gate!”. At midnight, they flooded through the checkpoints. More than 2 million people visited West Berlin that weekend to participate in a celebration that was, one journalist wrote, “the greatest street party in the history of the world.” People used hammers and picks to knock away chunks of the while cranes and bulldozers pulled down section after section. Soon the wall was gone and Berlin was united for the first time since 1945. “Only today,” one Berliner spray-painted on a piece of the wall, “is the war really over.”

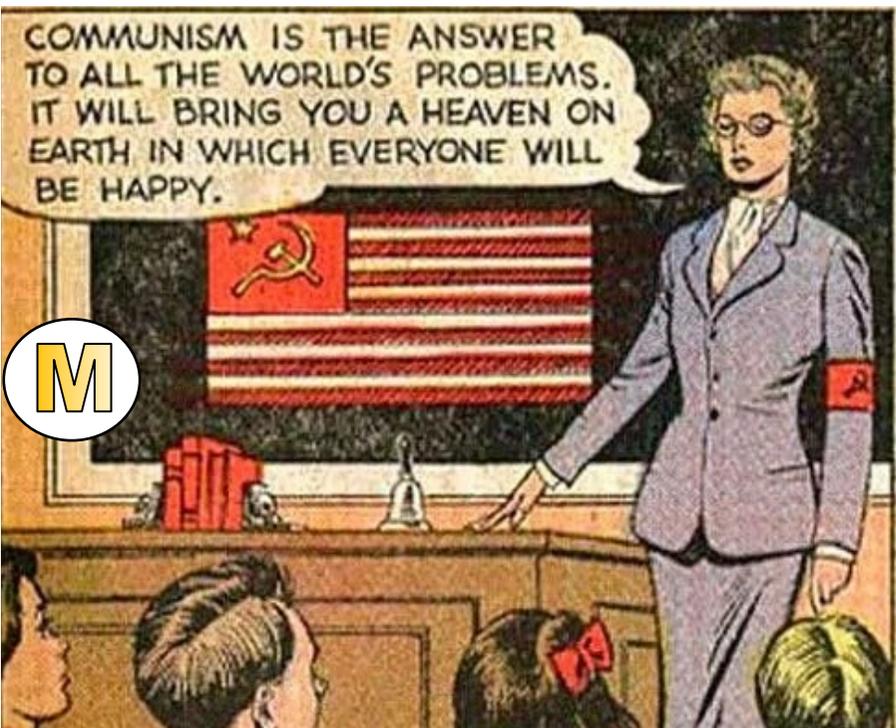
**History.com**



**The fall of the Berlin Wall, 4th November 1989.**



**A Soviet helicopter in Afghanistan  
The mujahedeen were proved weapons by the USA.**



"General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalization: Come here to this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, open this gate! Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall!"

**Ronald Reagan Speech, given in West Berlin, 1987.**



Ronald Reagan was elected US President in 1980, partly due to his criticism of the Soviet Union and his staunch anti-communist stance. Reagan was determined to increase pressure on the Soviets and intimidate them into making concessions in the Cold War.

**BBC History**



**Gorbachev's policies of Glasnost and Perestroika ...** Glasnost was the policy to be more 'open' in dealing with the West and an easing of the Cold War. Gorbachev encouraged more freedom of speech - he wanted communist politicians to stamp out corruption. Perestroika was an attempt to modernise and 'rebuild' the Soviet state. Gorbachev realized that military spending had to be reduced.

**BBC History.**



**Romania under Communist rule.**



**The Odd Couple**



Source: Bill Mauldin, Chicago Sun-Times, 1973 (adapted)



Soviet troops invaded Afghanistan. On 1 January 1980, the Soviets installed a pro-Soviet government led by former Afghan, Babrak Karmal. Islamic groups opposed the Soviet occupation. They were nationalists and against communism's suppression of religion. The Afghan army supported the Soviet Red Army. But it was not well trained and was poorly equipped. Islamic insurgent groups called the **Mujahideen**, were determined to fight against the Soviets. They were heavily armed as they were supplied by the USA and they received training from the CIA. The Mujahideen used hit and run attacks and they gaining control of the rural and mountainous areas of Afghanistan. The United Nations requested they leave and the USA placed economic sanctions on the USSR. Middle Eastern countries were critical of the invasion and there was unrest in republics within the USSR with large Muslim populations. When Mikhail Gorbachev came to power in 1985, he withdrew troops from Afghanistan. The Soviets signed a peace treaty in 1988.

BBC History



The Soviet economy ultimately collapsed in the late 1980s, ending decades of communist rule in Russia and Eastern Europe. Americans disagreed as to the cause: while economists and Reagan's critics claimed the Soviet empire had buckled under the weight of its own bloated defense spending and a protracted war in Afghanistan, Reagan and his supporters credited his hard-line anti-communist policies for defeating Soviet communism.

History.com



'A sense of failure and regret came though his (Gorbachev) abdication speech - especially in his sorrow over his people 'ceasing to be citizens of a great power'. Certainly in man of the street interviews can be believed the former Soviet people's consider him a failure. History will ne kinder - the Nobel prize he received for ending the Cold War was well deserved . His statue should stand in every European capital for it was Gorbachev who allowed them their independence. No Russian had done more to free his people than Alexander II who freed the serfs'.

A report in an American newspaper - 1991.



Gorbachev was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize and the Liberty Medal.

# The End of the Cold War: source summary

 **Task:** to write a one sentence summing up the key point from each source of information.

	The main point or message of the source
A	
B	
C	
D	
E	
F	
G	
H	
I	
J	
K	
L	
M	
N	
O	

The main point or message of the source

P

Q

R

S

T

U

V

W



**Events in Eastern Europe**

Make smart, summary notes  
about each factor.

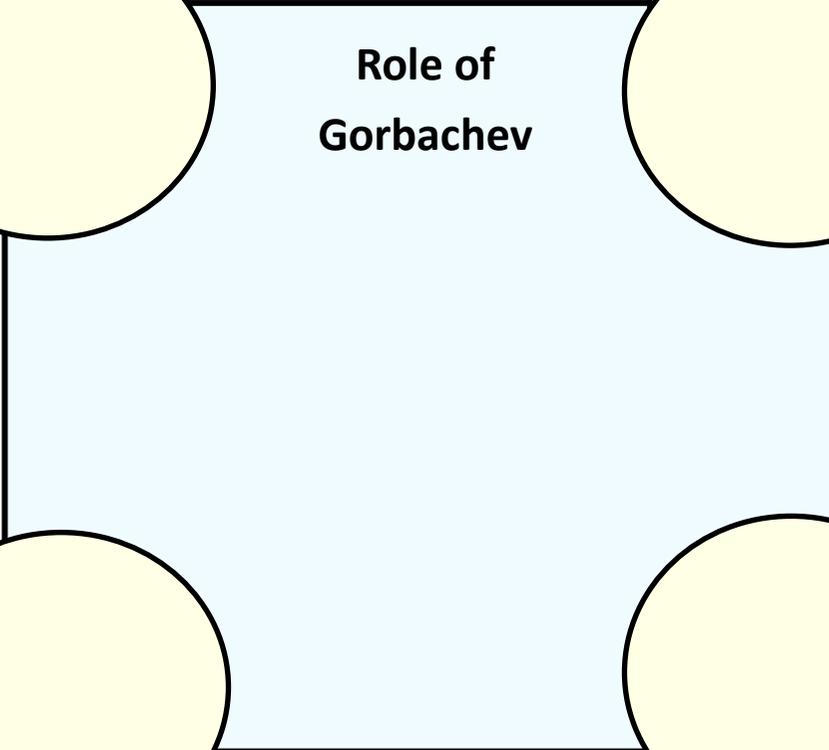
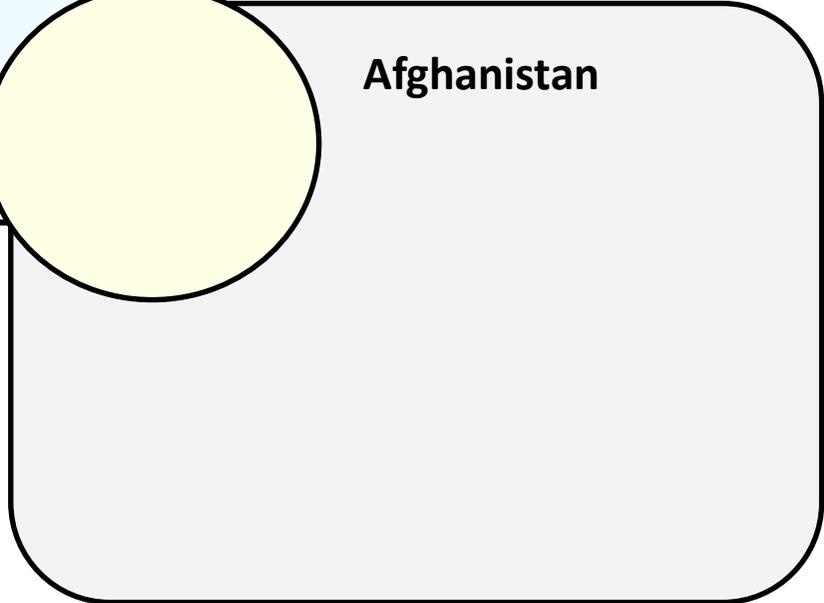
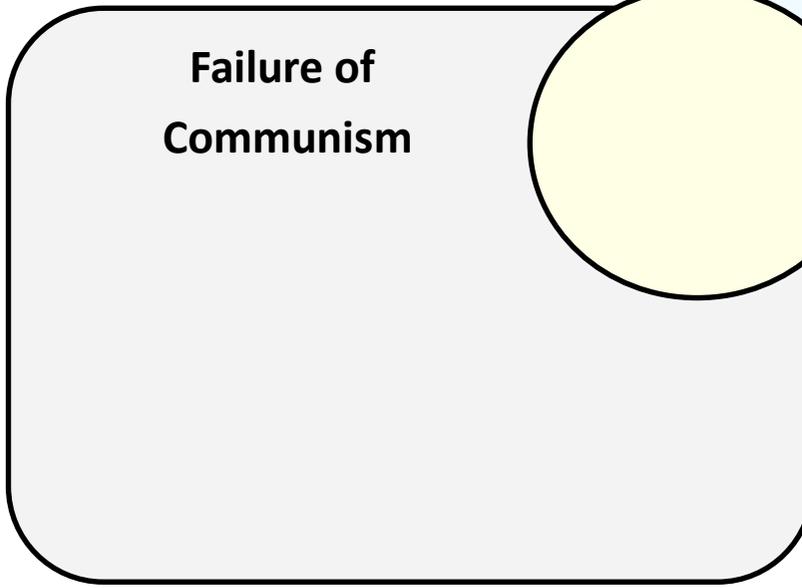
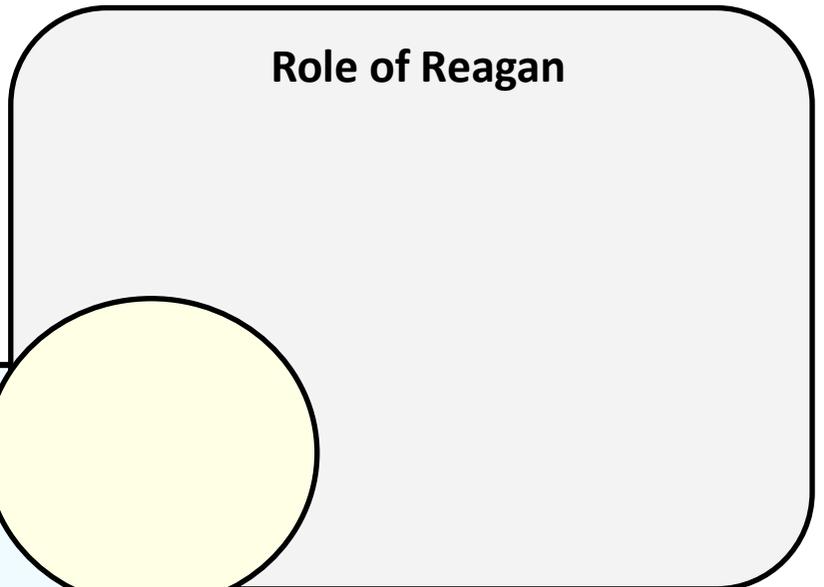
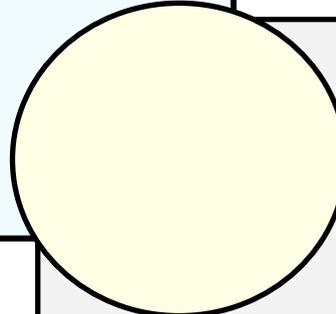
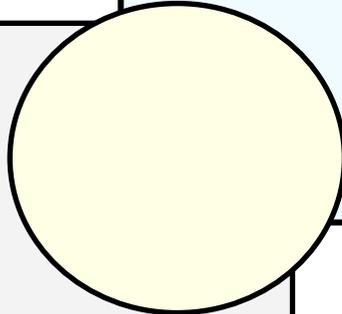
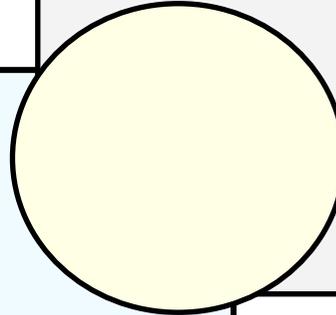
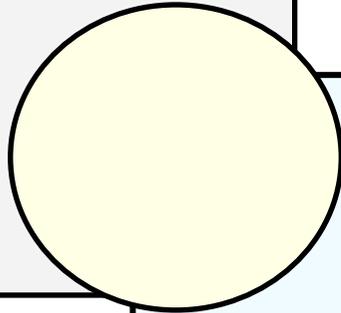
**Role of Reagan**

**Role of  
Gorbachev**

**Failure of  
Communism**

**Afghanistan**

Put any strong connections in the  
circles between factors.



# Why did the Cold War end?

**Mission:** to summarize + make links between the factors that ended the Cold War

## 1: The Role of Gorbachev



Glasnost
Perestroika
Military spending

## 2: Events in Eastern Europe



Hungary
East Germany
Berlin Wall

## 3: Solidarity in Poland



Power of People
Break from USSR
Example set

## 4: The Role of Reagan



Roll back communism
Peace through strength
'Star Wars' system

## 5: Soviet Defeat in Afghanistan



Economic cost
American intervention
Sanctions

## 6: Weaknesses of Communism



Oppressive rule
Economic failures
Corruption

Rank Factors  
1 - 6

USSR could not keep up with spending

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