

Reagan And Gorbachev: How The Cold War Ended

The Cold War was a period of geopolitical tension between the Soviet Union and the United States and their respective allies, which began after the Second World War. The term "Cold War" is used because there was no large-scale fighting directly between the two superpowers, but they each supported different sides in a number of proxy wars. The Cold War ended in 1991 with the dissolution of the Soviet Union.



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by Mark R. Joslyn

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There are a number of factors that contributed to the end of the Cold War. One factor was the rise of Mikhail Gorbachev to power in the Soviet Union in 1985. Gorbachev was a reform-minded leader who introduced a number of policies that helped to ease tensions with the United States. These policies included glasnost (openness) and perestroika (restructuring).

Glasnost allowed for more freedom of speech and expression in the Soviet Union, while perestroika allowed for more economic freedom.

Another factor that contributed to the end of the Cold War was the growing economic weakness of the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union had been spending heavily on its military for decades, and this had taken a toll on its economy. By the mid-1980s, the Soviet Union was facing a number of economic problems, including inflation, shortages of consumer goods, and a decline in productivity. These problems made it difficult for the Soviet Union to keep up with the United States in the arms race.

The policies of Ronald Reagan, who was president of the United States from 1981 to 1989, also played a role in the end of the Cold War. Reagan was a strong anti-communist who believed that the Soviet Union could be defeated through a combination of military strength and economic pressure. Reagan increased defense spending and pursued a number of policies that were designed to weaken the Soviet Union, including the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI).

In 1987, Reagan and Gorbachev signed the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces (INF) Treaty, which eliminated all intermediate-range nuclear missiles from Europe. This was the first major arms control agreement between the two superpowers since the 1972 Strategic Arms Limitation Treaty (SALT I). In 1991, Reagan and Gorbachev signed the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START I), which reduced the number of strategic nuclear weapons held by both countries. These treaties helped to reduce tensions between the two superpowers and paved the way for the end of the Cold War.

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 was another key event in the end of the Cold War. The Berlin Wall was a physical barrier that divided East and West Berlin. It was a symbol of the division between the communist and capitalist worlds. The fall of the Berlin Wall was a major blow to the Soviet Union and it helped to accelerate the process of German reunification.

The end of the Cold War was a major event in world history. It marked the end of decades of tension and conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States. It also led to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of a new world order.

The end of the Cold War was a complex process that involved a number of factors, including the rise of Mikhail Gorbachev, the growing economic weakness of the Soviet Union, and the policies of Ronald Reagan. The end of the Cold War was a major event in world history. It marked the end of decades of tension and conflict between the Soviet Union and the United States. It also led to the collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of a new world order.

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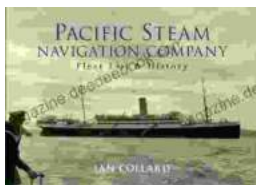
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